**Transcript of**

**ARC AGM 2016**

**12 &13 May 2016**

**Sir Clive Granger Building,**

**University Park,**

**Nottingham,**

**NG7 2RD**

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**Representing all senior managers**

**and professionals in HMRC**

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**Tuesday 12th April**

# Domestic Matters

**President’s opening remarks and 3rd report of Procedure Sub-Committee**

**Tony Wallace**

Ok colleagues, it’s bang on one o’clock. Ah we’re still missing. Can you hear me? Wave if you can hear me. Excellent for business. Ok colleagues settle down, it is now just about a minute past one o’clock so welcome. I know we are. Thanks Jeremy. Never trust a lawyer. Welcome to ARC’s AGM for 2016 and welcome first and foremost to Nottingham. For a number of years now we’ve discussed the possibility of taking the AGM out of London. We really are a national union and a national organisation and you can guess from my accent that I wasn’t born within the sound of bow bells, so it has been a longstanding belief of mine and of Committee that we should be seen to be a national organisation and take the opportunity to reflect that by going around the country. This is the first time we’ve tried to do this, it is I think a work in progress the place we’ve got organised for the meal tonight is absolutely fantastic and this venue I think’s a terrific venue and Nottingham since I live here is a lovely city but we are more than welcome and hopefully we’ll get some feedback from you positive and negative about what’s gone well and what’s gone less well perhaps over the course of the next two days.

There’s an awful lot of business to get through both this afternoon and tomorrow morning so I hope that colleagues will bear with us and that you’ll respect the times that Graham will be giving you in just a minute or two, if we’re to do that then you’ll have to show shome selm some self-restraint when I put my teeth in, around how we conduct the business and conduct our debates over the next couple of days. I’m looking forward to it and I’m sure it will be stimulating. To my left is Zohra Francis. Zohra is our new, sorry, new national officer looking after ARC on behalf of the FDA this is Zohra’s first opportunity to see AGM in action and I’m sure you’ll join me in making Zohra fully welcome. On my right is Vicky Johnson who is our President elect by this time tomorrow afternoon Vicky will be President of the union and you can see the delight all over her face and the absolute delight written all over mine.

So in a few minutes I’m going to introduce Graham Flew who will deliver the second report Graham I think of the standing third report? Fourth report? Third report, one of us knows what we’re doing, third report of the Procedure Sub-Committee but a couple of wee domestics first that I think we need to get out of the way. First of all can you put your mobile phones to silent, don’t turn them off because we have got a twitter account it’s @ARCAGM16 all one word, if people hashtag @AGM16 I don’t do Twitter. 2016. Shall we start that again [laughter]. It’s all going swimmingly. It’s hashtag ARCAGM2016. Thank you. I knew I should have let you do this. There shouldn’t be any fire alarm, there was a test this morning, but if there is can you make your way to that door on my right and out around to the car park hopefully we don’t have to worry about that.

I’ve just realised I haven’t got a couple of scrutineers, so we need a couple of scrutineers can we have a couple of volunteers from the audience to act as scrutineers should we go to a card vote. Amy and Andy? Is conference’s AGM content with that? Thank you very much, thanks both. And you told me to remember that.

Ok I think the last thing is just domestics in terms of the toilet if you’re needing the toilets they’re out the front door, just go out of here turn left right out the way you come in and you’ll find them there. I’ve got a wee note from Vicky to say welcome to Chris Elliott who is the employee relations lead I can’t see Chris do you want to give us a wave? Good man at the back thank you. So that’s who you know to get a hold of later on. Make yourself known to the audience Chris, you’re very welcome.

So if AGM is content I will ask Graham Flew to come forward and give us the third Procedure Sub-Committee report. Thank you Graham.

**Graham Flew**

Good afternoon AGM it’s the first time I’ve said that for Procedure Sub-Committee. The microphones here are work really well I’m speaking in a normal voice and you don’t have to move into the microphone because it will really upset people. This is the third report of the Procedure Sub-Committee, the first report was in the printed AGM the second report are in your packs this afternoon. My apologies we managed two versions of the second report but you’ve got the real one now I’m please to say. The second report also includes an amendment to motion 46 and it contains some important information about conflicting motions which will be tomorrow motions 46 47 and 48 and Tony will help you through those tomorrow morning, he’ll really look forward to that.

The purpose of me standing here is a reminder movers of motions have three minutes to move the motion, as outlined in the second report. The amber light will come on, see, go yeah, the amber light will come, thank you very much, that will come on after two minutes indicating that you have one minute left. It says here I move secretary [inaudible] fully briefed so that must be right. All other speakers have a minute and a [laughter] yeah thank you very much yeah. All other speakers have one minute thirty seconds and we’ve decided the amber light for those speakers will come on after one minute. So if you moving the motion you’ve got a minute left, if you’re other speakers you’ve got thirty seconds left, and at that point the red light will come on.

We’ve got lots of motions to get through today and tomorrow, unless you show some discipline we’re not going to finish our business, and we always finish our business. Any motion not called by the President will be deemed to have been considered by the AGM and remitted to Committee. Please remember them those minutes are maximums maxima not minimums. Do not feel obliged to keep on talking until the red light goes on because you’ll upset Zohra and me and everybody else in the room. Blah blah. The next my job now is to formally move all three Procedure Sub-Committee reports, if you disagree with anything in any of those reports you need to move reference back as soon as I’ve stopped speaking and I will stop speaking. My final task is to thank the other members of Procedure Sub-Committee Jim Rogers, Zohra Francis, Paula Houghton, thank you very much. I formally move all three reports. Thank you.

**Tony Wallace**

Is AGM content to accept the all three PSC reports?

**Unidentified**

Aye

**Tony Wallace**

*Motion 1*

*1. TO CONFIRM the minutes of the 2015 Annual General Meeting (see arc-forum).*

*Committee*

Excellent thank you very much. So we move to the first part of the formal business of the day, the first motions for you colleagues with us today are fairly formal issues that we deal with every year, the first two I’ll move myself I won’t bother going to the lectern but when you come to speak please do come the lectern, if you are keen to speak could you make your way down to the front here just in these two chairs at the front so that we don’t have any delays in people coming forward to talk, so on behalf of ARC Committee it’s my job to move motion number 1 and that’s to confirm the minutes of the 2015 annual General Meeting, those were published on ARC News and on ARC Forum on the fourteenth of October 2015 I’ll formally move, is AGM content to agree the minutes as produced last year?

Thank. Graham [inaudible]. Good man. Thank you.

*Motion 1: Carried*

*Motion 2*

*2. TO RECEIVE the Annual Report.*

*Committee*

Moving on to motion number 2, again a formal piece of business it’s the annual report which has been produced in the AGM agenda from pages 30 onwards. Is AGM content to receive the annual report?

*Motion 2: Carried*

Thank you very much that’s excellent.

Can I ask Eugene Mitchell then to move motion 3 on behalf of ARC Committee.

*Motion 3*

*3. TO RECEIVE the Honorary Treasurer’s Annual Report and Statement of Accounts.*

*Committee*

**Eugene Mitchell**

Thanks Tony. Good afternoon. I’m actually going to be dealing with motions 3 to 7. So motion 3 is to receive the annual accounts. Hopefully you’ve had a chance to have a look at the accounts that are in the pack and you may have spotted from that there’s no date on the accounts at date of approval and that’s because they’re not final yet because they haven’t yet been audited by our auditors. The reason for that is due to the accelerated timetable that we have this year we’re about a month or so ahead of previous years’ timetables and our auditors are only just starting to look at look at things. I don’t anticipate any significant changes to these accounts having met with them last week to discuss a few issues and therefore once the auditors and also the trustees are content the intention is to post these onto the forum and possibly probably on the new website as well. If there are any significant changes between what’s in the pack and the final version which as I’ve said I don’t expect there to be, then they will be fully explained to everybody and therefore on that basis I would like to move to receive the annual report.

**Tony Wallace**

Are AGM content to receive? Thank you.

*Motion 3: Carried*

Motion 4 Eugene?

*Motion 4*

*4. TO RECEIVE the Benevolent Fund Accounts.*

*Committee*

**Eugene Mitchell**

Well motion 4 we’re not actually moving this motion. This is to do with the Benevolent Fund accounts and please don’t bother just rushing through your papers because I don’t think you’re going to find anything in there just now. Again this is down well it’s down to two factors. One is the accelerated timetable, but also due to pressure of work in fitting things in. There is and please believe, you can believe me if you like, there is nothing sinister whatsoever about the non-appearance of the Benevolent Fund accounts and again once they are produced and finalised they will be we’ll publish them on the forum so as I said we’re not moving that particular motion but just want to make sure that people were clear what the position there was.

*Motion 4: Not moved*

*Motion 5*

*5. That this AGM resolves that no transfer be made to the General Fund of the Benevolent Fund during 2016.*

*Committee*

Motion 5 is hopefully

**Tony Wallace**

Did we say the need to take them one at a time Eugene, take them all together

**Eugene Mitchell**

I’m not moving

**Tony Wallace**

Oh apologies

**Eugene Mitchell**

Will I move it for you anyway Tony so that you can. Motion 5 is self explanatory and you might think well if we’ve not got the Benevolent Fund accounts then how we can say that we’re happy not to have a transfer. But we know based on recent years activity that there is sufficient in the fund to cover any likely grants that are going to come and for that for that reason we’re not recommending any transfer from our General Fund to the Benevolent Fun. So is AGM content that no transfer be made to the Benevolent Fund?

Thank you.

*Motion 5: Carried*

*Motion 6*

*6. That this AGM resolves that the provisional sectional subscriptions for 2016 shall be £3.*

*Committee*

**Eugene Mitchell**

Motion 6 is another standard or standing motion I suppose and this is to do with the political fund levy. So this is the 25p per month that most of us pay and it gets recorded separately in the Political Fund in the balance sheet. The 25p a month has been the same amount as it has been for a number of years we’re not looking to change it, therefore is AGM content with the three pounds provisional subscription.

*Motion 6: Carried*

Thank you.

# Rules

*Motion 7*

*7. That this AGM recognises the potential adverse impact likely to occur if the Trades Union Bill becomes law in its current form. Among the detriments are additional reporting requirements that are disproportionately burdensome for small unions and sections. These include members having to opt in to payment of any political levy and having to obtain positive periodic confirmation that members continue to opt in on a more frequent basis than is currently the position (every ten years).*

*The reality is that for many years, ARC has not undertaken any activity that could be deemed political and therefore the funds, earmarked under the Political Fund umbrella, have not been called upon. Furthermore, there is no activity in the foreseeable future that would require the use of such funds.*

*In light of the above, ARC Committee recommends the discontinuance of the fund levy as soon as practicably possible.*

*AGM is therefore asked to consent to holding an ARC Political Fund review ballot in 2016, with the recommendation from Committee that the political fund levy be discontinued thereafter. This AGM therefore instructs Committee to bring forward proposed rule changes to withdraw the political fund levy as soon as practicable after the Review Ballot. Further, this AGM agrees that the funds earmarked Political Fund contributions be transferred to the ARC general funds This AGM therefore instructs Committee to communicate this matter to the membership and ballot the membership about bringing to an end the political fund and if possible, transfer it to the general fund. If the membership ballot mandates the abolition, Committee should ensure that the collection of the contributions to the political fund should be ceased as soon as is reasonably practical.*

*Committee*

**Eugene Mitchell**

Motion 7 is also to do with the Political Fund and it’s an enabling motion this time and it’s really to allow us to deal with the Trades Union Bill when it becomes law. One of the changes that it will introduce is to require trade union members to opt in to paying political levies and that’s the sort of thing that we just looked at in motion 6. Currently everybody is in unless you actively opt out, whereas in the future before a trade union can collect a levy, such a levy, then each member will have to have taken positive action to opt in. In addition this this will not be a one-off exercise. Members will have to confirm their continuing opt-in much more frequently than currently. And as just with everything that’s in this trade union bill the government is really taking a sledgehammer to crack a nut. But having said that the reality is that we don’t do we don’t do political stuff in ARC section and therefore the balance of the fund just keeps growing each year. As a consequence of all this, Committee recommend that we discontinue the Fund levy as soon as practically possible. And of course that might seem just a little ironic given that AGM has just approved the continuing payment of a levy but we can’t move forward with our recommendation to discontinue the levy until we’ve balloted the whole of the membership. So Committee is asking AGM to consent to holding a Political Fund review ballot and on the assumption that Committee’s recommendation is adopted they’ll be bringing forward appropriate rule changes, will transfer the balance that’s at the Political Fund just now into the General Fund and we’ll cease collecting the contributions so I do hope that Committee is content to pass this motion.

**Tony Wallace**

Are there any speakers to the motion? Steve.

**Steve Dodd**

Ok but be warned those corners can bite. Steve Dodd from Leeds Centre. I see that the recommendation is to hold a ballot, I just wanted to say something about the information that members I feel members should have. It’ not a decision that’s going to be taken lightly I appreciate that. The origins of our quite unusual sustained contribution to the Political Fund was a response to anti trade union legislation in the 1980s, you know years ago history, that was because we feared that we wouldn’t be able to do things that we wanted to as a union and as a professional association. This is a response to the burdens that [inaudible] in its place. What I would like to see is linking that to our response to the current Trade Union Bill., I think it’s more important we address the future than try and worry three pages worth of motions about the past. So whether that’s part of the ballot recommendations or whether it’s other things that Committee do otherwise, I think that to say ok it’s going to be very difficult to administer the Political Fund and we’ve never had any particular use for it because things didn’t turn out how we predicted, doesn’t mean we ignore the rest of it so I think that what should be coupled with that we say it’s too onerous and we haven’t had things that have been affected then what is the union going to do to make sure it can fund its activities. We all know the news this week about Panama and all the rest of it, that sort of we have to ask ourselves whether we could be continued to run sort of campaigns about the proper conduct of a tax administration in this country under the current trade union law and other laws. So I would just urge a wider view and not a narrow view. I’m content to support the motion on that basis.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Steve. Any other speakers to the motion? There is no one in op-position so there’s not right to reply I’ll put it to the vote, all those in favour please show?

Those against?

Thank you that’s clearly carried thank you.

*Motion 7: Carried*

Moving on to motion number 8 which is also in the name of Committee.

*Motion 8*

*8. That this AGM agrees that the Rules of the Association of Revenue and Customs be amended so as to allow Committee more flexibility in deciding the date of the AGM and consequential amendments to election dates etc., by the following amendments to the Rules:*

*“2.7.1 There shall be an Annual General Meeting of ARC held in each year, which shall be held at a place and on a date as near to the penultimate Saturday in May as is found convenient to be fixed by Committee annually.”*

*The words “as near to the penultimate Saturday in May” shall be deleted to read…*

*“2.7.1 There shall be an Annual General Meeting of ARC held in each year, which shall be held at a place and on a date as is found convenient to be fixed by Committee annually.”*

*“8.5.1 Each Centre shall normally meet not later than 24 March in each year to consider matters to be brought before the Annual General Meeting, and shall meet immediately before the holding of any Extraordinary General Meeting for the purpose of discussing any business to be transacted at such meeting. Meetings shall also be held at such other times as the Centre Officers or Committee may deem advisable, or ARC Committee may recommend for any special purpose.”*

*The words “not later than 24 March” shall be deleted and the words added “(ensuring compliance with rule 9.1.3)” to read…*

*“8.5.1 Each Centre shall normally meet in each year to consider matters to be brought before the Annual General Meeting (ensuring compliance with rule 9.1.3), and shall meet immediately before the holding of any Extraordinary General Meeting for the purpose of discussing any business to be transacted at such meeting. Meetings shall also be held at such other times as the Centre Officers or Committee may deem advisable, or ARC Committee may recommend for any special purpose.”*

*“12.2.1 In December preceding any year for which an election of Officers is required the Secretary shall publish to the membership a notice calling for nominations. Nominations of members for election to any Officer post must be signed by any two ARC members. Such nominations endorsed by the nominee must be in the hands of the Secretary not later than 15 January of the year in which the election is to take place.”*

*Shall change to…*

*“12.2.1 Not later than 148 days before the AGM for any year for which an election of Officers is required the Secretary shall publish to the membership a notice calling for nominations. Nominations of members for election to any Officer post must be signed by any two ARC members. Such nominations endorsed by the nominee must be in the hands of the Secretary not later than 30 days following the notice calling for nominations."*

*“12.2.2 Immediately after 15 January the Secretary shall issue to each member nominated for election a list showing the names and Centres of all members nominated.”*

*Shall change to…*

*“12.2.2 Immediately after the 30 days mentioned in rule 12.2.1 has elapsed, the Secretary shall issue to each member nominated for election a list showing the names and Centres of all members nominated.”*

*“12.2.3 Any member nominated may withdraw the nomination by giving notice in writing to the Secretary before 23 January.”*

*Shall change to…*

*“12.2.3 Any member nominated may withdraw the nomination by giving notice in writing to the Secretary not later than 38 days following the notice calling for nominations.”*

*“12.2.4 Any member nominated for election may submit in writing to the Secretary by 23 January an election address of not more than four hundred words. Where a member is nominated for more than one Office, they may submit a separate election address for each Office for which they have been nominated. If an election address includes at its head any or all of the candidate’s name, the Office for which they are standing, and the words “election address”, these shall not be counted against the word limit.”*

*Shall change to…*

*“12.2.4 Any member nominated for election may submit in writing to the Secretary not later than 38 days following the notice calling for nominations, an election address of not more than four* *hundred words. Where a member is nominated for more than one Office, they may submit a separate election address for each Office for which they have been nominated. If an election address includes at its head any or all of the candidate’s name, the Office for which they are standing, and the words “election address”, these shall not be counted against the word limit.”*

*“12.3.4 Voting papers in regard to each Office for which a ballot is required shall be issued to all ARC members whose subscriptions are not in arrear by the person or persons having general conduct of the election pursuant to Rule 12.3.1 not later than 8 February. The voting papers shall be accompanied by a copy of all election addresses duly received from members nominated for each Office for which a ballot is required and a reply-paid envelope marked on the outside "Voting Paper".”*

*Shall change to…*

*“12.3.4 Voting papers in regard to each Office for which a ballot is required shall be issued to all ARC members whose subscriptions are not in arrear by the person or persons having general conduct of the election pursuant to Rule 12.3.1 not later than 54 days following the notice calling for nominations. The voting papers shall be accompanied by a copy of all election addresses duly received from members nominated for each Office for which a ballot is required and a reply-paid envelope marked on the outside "Voting Paper".”*

*“12.3.8 The voting papers shall be returned to the independent scrutineer on or before 28 February in the reply-paid envelope provided for the purpose.”*

*Shall change to…*

*“12.3.8 The voting papers shall be returned to the independent scrutineer not later than 74 days following the notice calling for nominations, in the reply-paid envelope provided for the purpose.”*

*“13.2.1 In February of any year in which an election is required, the Secretary shall call for nominations from among the membership for Ordinary Members of the Committee. Nominations of members for election to the Committee must be in the hands of the Secretary by 14 March. Each such nomination must be endorsed by the nominee, and be signed by two ARC members. If the nominee is eligible to fill for the Reserved Seat for Northern Ireland, this must be indicated on the nomination form.”*

*Shall change to…*

*“13.2.1 Not later than 90 days before the AGM for any year in which an election is required, the Secretary shall call for nominations from among the membership for Ordinary Members of the Committee. Nominations of members for election to the Committee must be in the hands of the Secretary not later than 30 days following the notice calling for nominations. Each such nomination must be endorsed by the nominee, and be signed by two ARC members. If the nominee is eligible to fill for the Reserved Seat for Northern Ireland, this must be indicated on the nomination form.”*

*“13.2.3 Immediately after 14 March the Secretary shall issue to each member nominated for election a list showing the names and Centres of all members nominated.”*

*Shall change to…*

 *“13.2.3 Immediately after the 30 days mentioned in rule 13.2.1 has elapsed, the Secretary shall issue to each member nominated for election a list showing the names and Centres of all members nominated.”*

*“13.2.4 Any member nominated for election may withdraw the nomination by giving notice in writing to the Secretary before 22 March.”*

*Shall change to…*

*“13.2.4 Any member nominated for election may withdraw the nomination by giving notice in writing to the Secretary not later than 38 days following the notice calling for nominations.”*

*“13.2.5 Any member nominated for election may submit in writing to the Secretary by 22 March an election address of not more than four hundred. If an election address includes at its head any or all of the candidate’s name and Centre, the fact that they are standing for Committee, or the words “election address”, these shall not be counted against the word limit.”*

*Shall change to…*

*“13.2.5 Any member nominated for election may submit in writing to the Secretary not later than 38 days following the notice calling for nominations, an election address of not more than four hundred words. If an election address includes at its head any or all of the candidate’s name and Centre, the fact that they are standing for Committee, or the words “election address”, these shall not be counted against the word limit.”*

 *“13.3.2 Any members who move into, out of Northern Ireland shall be eligible for the Reserved Seat if they lived or worked in Northern Ireland on 22 March.”*

*Shall changer to…*

*“13.3.2 Any members who move into, out of Northern Ireland shall be eligible for the Reserved Seat if they lived or worked in Northern Ireland on the day 38 days following the notice calling for nominations.”*

*“13.4.5 Voting papers shall be issued to all members whose subscriptions are not in arrear by the person or persons having general conduct of the election pursuant to Rule 13.4.1 not later than 14 April. The voting papers shall be accompanied by all election addresses duly received from any of the nominees, and a reply-paid envelope bearing on the outside the words "Voting Paper".”*

*Shall change to…*

*“13.4.5 Voting papers shall be issued to all members whose subscriptions are not in arrears by the person or persons having general conduct of the election pursuant to Rule 13.4.1 not later than 61 days following the notice calling for nominations. The voting papers shall be accompanied by all election addresses duly received from any of the nominees, and a reply-paid envelope bearing on the outside the words "Voting Paper".”*

*“13.4.8 The voting papers shall be returned to the independent scrutineer on or before 30 April in the reply-paid envelopes supplied for the purpose.”*

*Shall change to…*

*“13.4.8 The voting papers shall be returned to the independent scrutineer not later than 77 days following the notice calling for nominations, in the reply-paid envelopes supplied for the purpose.”*

*Committee*

**Jim Rogers**

Hi Jim Rogers on behalf of Committee I have the honour to propose motion 8 to you which is clearly a most boring motion this AGM [laughter] I’ll take that particular crown. It’s quite long so I don’t intend to read it. The old rules used to dictate when we issued notice for ballots and for the AGM and they were tied about the predication that the AGM was a fixed date pretty much in May and because we now don’t want it to be fixed that date we want flexibility, the rules have to have something else. So I’ve tried to keep the essence of the old rules so all the time gaps are the same they just have to be linked to a non-specified date. That’s the point of the very very long motion. I commend it to you.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Jim. Are there any speakers to the motion? No I’ll move straight to the vote then. Please all those in favour please show?

Those against?

Carried nem con. Thank you.

*Motion 8: Carried*

# Trainees

Moving on we now have a block of motions 9 through to 13 these motions are all on the subject of trainees they’re also in common debate and for new colleagues here today what we’ll do is we’ll move each of those motions we will then have a common discussion around the motions and then we will ultimately put each of the motions in turn to a vote. So that’s the order of play for us now. So Mr Black I think moving for Glasgow? Thank you.

*Motion 9*

*9. (\*) That this AGM welcomes the continued investment in trainees and in training by HMRC. However we are concerned that the continually increasing focus on specialisms is inconsistent with Building our Future and will produce tax professionals with a regime rather than a customer focus. If the department is serious about building full careers within individual regional centres with professions properly represented it must ensure its trainees are not so narrowly developed that they cannot easily adapt as the requirements of tax legislation and practice change.*

*This AGM instructs Committee to seek to work with HMRC to ensure that the requirements of training schemes are not so narrowly drawn that they produce staff to fit the current needs of individual regimes rather than staff and leaders who fit the continuing and constantly developing needs of the business.*

*Glasgow Centre*

**Graham Black**

Thank you Tony. Graham Black from Glasgow Centre happy to follow the dullest motion apparently on the sheet today. Motion 9 is about trainees, I’m really glad to say that in the Glasgow delegation we’ve got a number of trainees with us this year , I know the same is true for a number of other delegations, you might ask therefore why in the first motion trainees have got me up speaking about it, partly I think because we like to wear the old ones out first but it’s partly because there are real concerns from the trainees about what is actually taking place, this is also about how the department is going to be over the next period. This is not it is about trainees individually but it’s also about the working environment we’re all going to be in for the next ten twenty years. We’re all really delighted to have so many trainees in the department they make a real big difference in all the areas of the department they move to, I can entirely understand why business areas want to get trainees working in their specialisms as soon as possible. Entirely understand that. But these are big issues that will affect us for quite some time and we do think there has to be a bit of a pause and make sure that what we’re doing is right, not only for the individual trainees but right for the department going forward. It makes sense to have a broad start to your career so that you can then decide as your talents develop and as the department makes sense of what your abilities are, to actually focus you in the right direction. If we do that too soon or on too little information it’s not going to be right for individuals and it’s not necessarily going to be right for the department. What we’re saying here is that we want to work with the department and you’ll see the motion is very much about ARC asking ARC Committee to work with HMRC it’s not saying we think people are doing things badly it’s just that we seem to be rushing into things sometimes because of short term problems that we’re trying to cope with. It’s really important that the trainees feel confident about all this and it’s fair to say that a number do feel that perhaps streaming at an early stage into specialisms while we’re coming up with kind words and good words about how that will not limit people’s opportunities in the future, we know that sometimes three or four years down the track a vacancy comes up and there are two candidates one has been spent four years doing it in one specialism and one in the specialism of that particular area people will tend to go towards the area where they can get people coming in at full speed. We understand the need to actually be looking at how we get trainees into all the different business areas but let’s just make sure it’s a long term strategic answer and not just a kneejerk reaction to an immediate problem, so we urge you to support this motion. Thank you.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Graham. Apologies for that you can see that we’re there right on top of the game here with the timers this one beeps and that one makes all kinds of noises. Can I call on somebody to from London BCD please to move motion number 10. Thank you.

We’ll try not to beep this time.

*Motion 10*

*10. (\*) This AGM notes the internal work and limited consultation on options for a new modernised TSP course and the potential impact on both lines of business and the trainees themselves. This AGM instructs Committee to make representations to HMRC to encourage options for change that will best meet the needs of trainees and business in producing the tax professionals of the future.*

*London BCD Centre*

**Carolyn Williams**

Right well I’m Carolyn Williams and I’m here representing Andy Mill for London BCD because he’s got flu and I hope I’m not going to spread any germs. I sort of endorse Graham has said about how we make sure that our TSPs get the best start in the job. The only thing I’d like to add is to make sure that we do concentrate on technical capability and that is seen as really important and really important for our leaders of the future. It’s not just about the sort of practical skills you have as a leader it’s about fully understanding what the job means, what it is we’re here to do, and fully understanding the compliance role that we have. So I would like to move this motion. Thank you very much.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Carolyn. Mover for Cambridge motion number 11 please. Cheers Dom.

*Motion 11*

*11. (\*) That this AGM notes the significant changes proposed by Tax Academy with regards to tax trainees and the TSP course.*

*This AGM is disappointed that no consultation with ARC and other relevant stakeholders took place prior to the proposals.*

*This AGM instructs ARC Committee to push Tax Academy to engage with them when developing proposals for the future of TSP.*

*Cambridge Centre*

**Dominic Bartley**

Dominic Bartley Cambridge Centre. I agree with both the sentiments of Carolyn and Graham. Having been involved in the E&C recruitment campaign what I can say is our trainees represent the realistic future that we have with the department, we are going to struggle to bring in people from the outside at grade 7 and grade 6. So I urge that we do the best for the trainees that we possibly can so I support everything that’s been said and I urge that you support motion number 11.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Dominic. Mover for motion number 12 from Glasgow please.

*Motion 12*

*12. (\*) That this AGM is concerned about the pace of change to training schemes and the extent to which the needs of the business are reflected in such change. Successful delivery of the training schemes run under the auspices of the Tax Academy is hugely dependent on colleagues across HMRC for example for Business Learning Managers, for tutors, for colleagues to write learning materials, for travel and subsistence and for locations.*

*This AGM instructs Committee to seek to ensure that the Tax Academy engages with stakeholders, including ARC, at the right level at the right time so that changes to trainee schemes are not made unnecessarily and that the changes meet HMRC's requirements first and foremost, prioritised above external stakeholders.*

*Glasgow Centre*

**Oliver Lurz**

Hi I’m Oliver Lurz I’m a TSP14 trainee based in Large Business in Glasgow. It’s my first AGM [cheering] and this my first motion I hope is something fairly unobjectionable. It’s related to changes to the training scheme which I’m on and my colleagues are on. I’ll say something about the pace of changes which have been happening. When I applied for this job roughly two years ago I applied for the TPDP course and then by the time I turned up to work I was informed that actually it’s the TSP course now and I believe further changes are being proposed by Tax Academy at the moment. And essentially there’s sort of two points to this motion. The first is not to make unnecessary changes to the training and the second is that if changes are necessary we would urge Tax Academy to please consult with the people involved and the people who have to deliver the changes before they’re made. Thank you.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Oliver that was excellent. Moving on to motion number 13 please on behalf of Liverpool.

*Motion 13*

*13. (\*) That this AGM instructs Committee to seek commitment from Tax Academy to enter into meaningful and timely consultation with both ARC and other key stakeholders in the proposed changes to development programmes for G7s.*

*Liverpool Centre*

**Kevin Size**

I’m Kevin Size from Liverpool I’m on TSP15. Our motion echoes what’s been said before and it’s that when HMRC are proposing changes to the TSP course or any future grade 7 course or whatever they call it is that they consult with ARC and all the other key stakeholders including the regional BLMs. I’d ask you to support our motion and all the other motions that have gone before. Thank you

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Kevin. We now open it up into common debate. Do we have any speakers to any and all of the motions that have been put before you? Yes Graham

**Graham Flew**

Graham Flew Cambridge Centre. Urging you to support all of these motions. What’s common in all of them is they all ask for some sort of consultation. Committee, of which I’m a part, need to ensure that we have this consultation and we report back and we get involved. And President Johnson you need to make some noise about this, sorry Tony she will be by then. So support all the motions especially 11. Thank you

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Graham. Any other speakers to the motions? No thank you there was no one in opposition so there’s no right to reply.

Beginning with motion number 9 please. Would those in favour could you please show?

Thank you. Any against?

Carried nem con.

*Motion 9: Carried*

Motion 10 London BCD, those in favour?

Against?

Carried nem con.

*Motion 10: Carried*

Motion 11 in name of Cambridge, those in favour?

Those against?

As before clearly carried.

*Motion 11: Carried*

Motion 12 in the name of Glasgow please those in favour?

Thank you. Those against?

It’s clearly carried.

*Motion 12: Carried*

And motion 13 please, in the name of Liverpool. In favour?

Thank you and against?

No all clearly carried. Thank you colleagues.

*Motion 13: Carried*

We move on now to another block of motions on trainees. These are motions 14, 15 and 16 and again they’re taken in common debate so can I have a mover please for motion 14 from Liverpool. Thank you.

*Motion 14*

*14. (+) That this AGM instructs Committee to engage with Tax Academy to seek and obtain a full and detailed explanation for the differences in the number of MMU credits awarded for TPDP2012 and subsequent programmes.*

*Liverpool Centre*

**Michael Wood**

Good afternoon I’m Michael Wood from Liverpool Centre and a 2012 TPDP trainee and a first time attendee at conference [applause] I bring this motion to ask for Committee to engage with the Tax Academy and seek a full and detailed explanation of the MMU accreditation changes which have taken place as part of the transition from the TPDP to the TSP course. As a TPDP trainee I’ve completed four years of studies across a number of taxes with the main emphasis being on corporation tax. However with the introduction of TSP course trainees now site exams in the final two years of their training which are focused on their particular tax stream so for example a CT streamer will sit CT focussed exams. I’m now coming to the end of my training and will be awarded a certain amount of MMU credits for each module that I have successfully completed. Under the TSP scheme CT streamers will be awarded more MMU credits for studying what appears to be the same material that I’ve studied. There has been little or no communication on the specifics of the changes in the MMU accreditation. I would therefore urge you to support this motion in order for this information to be obtained from the Tax Academy.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Michael. Mover please for motion 15 also from Liverpool.

*Motion 15*

*15. (+) That this AGM instructs Committee to engage with Tax Academy to ensure parity of learning and development across the different heads of tax on TSP, throughout the life of the programme, and to ensure that no one head of tax is seen as more superior or favourable than others.*

*Liverpool Centre*

**Ross Starkie**

Hi there Ross Starkie Liverpool TSP2014 trainee. This links to the above motion with new accreditation and as well as kind of streaming in general there seems to be kind of there doesn’t seem to be parity of learning with the different streams that people seem to go down. Last year was the first year that TSP previously TPDP trainees were streamed at the midyear point of their training and this is where the streams started to look different. In this case the CT stream now includes more exams and more training than potentially other streams do. The concern is that certain departments and certain people may favour certain streams depending on where they’ve streamed from which doesn’t seem fair based on the fact we don’t really get a say in where we’re streamed into to a certain extent. For the people in the streams with more exams concerned there’s a lot more work for the same promotion than other stream trainees; and on the flip side there’s concern from those trainees in streams with less exams that they might not be looked at as favourably as promoted grade 7s depending on where they’ve done their training. So please support this motion and the other ones linked to it, that ARC will ensure the parity of learning across CT streams and the future department doesn’t see one stream as a more favourable option to have. Thank you.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks. Motion 16 please in the name of West Midlands.

*Motion 16*

*16. (+) That this AGM notes with the changes to the TSP programme HMRC should ensure that trainees who are streamed into CT should be at no disadvantage to those who stream into PT, VAT and EC.*

*At present the trainees streamed into CT have to take more examinations than their peers and achieve 368 points from those examinations in order to achieve promotion at the end of the course. By contrast, VAT streamers need just 242 points, EC 251 and PT 270.*

*It is understood and accepted that the business requires those trainees who have streamed into CT to undertake more training due to the level of technical knowledge required to undertake their specific roles on completion of the course. However they are at a disadvantage in having to pass more examinations and a correspondingly higher potential failure rate.*

*This AGM instructs Committee to negotiate with HMRC with a view to obtaining an agreement that all TSP trainees should be required to achieve a similar number of points in order to achieve promotion at the end of the course, with additional non-examinable training for TSP trainees where necessary.*

*West Midlands Centre*

**Kim Matthews**

Hello, my name is Kim Matthews and I am a TPDP2012 trainee from the West Midlands Centre. Now following on from the two motions previous I’d like AGM to note that trainees that do stream into CT have to take more examinations than their peers who are streaming into VAT and EC. We do accept that HMRC as a business requires more a higher level of technical knowledge from the CT streamers however we would like to instruct Committee to negotiate with HMRC with a view to obtaining agreement that all TSP trainees should be required to achieve a similar number of points in order to achieve promotion at the end of the course with additional non-examinable training for TSPs where necessary. Thank you.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Kim. That’s the three motions in this block of motions so I’ll call speakers in common debate if there’s anyone wishes to speak? Mike?

**Mike Simmons**

Mike Simmonds Leicester Centre. It’s a mess. That there is no doubt about it in my opinion this whole points scoring promotion credits system is a mess. But we have to remember though is that the points have nothing to do with promotion at all, they’re to do with the degree that you get from the university. But I agree it doesn’t seem in any way sensible that one stream have to get a third more than another stream. But it’s not a promotion issue it’s something else entirely.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Mike.

**Amy Carr**

Amy Carr, Liverpool Centre, Committee. I have the slightly you know we’ve heard all about how the CT stream have got a lot more exams than the other streams and I’ve got the unenviable task of managing the CT stream and trying to keep them motivated to do all the additional exams that they’ve got to do whilst their peers don’t have to. It it just it just doesn’t make sense and the way I’m motivating them is by saying that you’re the ones that are going to be able to you know stay in these roles when promotions arise so are they who’s at the advantage it just makes no sense the whole thing’s been a complete mess and I don’t really know what the point is. [Laughter] I don’t know if anyone knows what the point is.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Amy. Could I just ask speakers if you could indicate if you’re the position where you’re supporting or opposing the motion when you begin your speech just after you say your name it’s easier for me to keep a handle on where the debate’s going Thank you. Sorry.

**Adi Bland**

Adi Bland, Preston Centre. Fully in support of everything we’ve heard so far. Just want to outline a little bit about my own peculiar situation, that I started as a TPDP2012 unfortunately due to some health concerns I have now been deferred into possibly TPDP2013 or it might be TSP2013 nobody’s quite sure. I will b e a CT specialist because that’s what I’ve always been so I’ve been streamed at the end of my fourth year rather than at the end of the second year and the sort of things that we’re talking about getting some clarity of what all these courses mean, particularly brought into sharp focus by my own situation. Another thing the parity of esteem needs to be levelled across the board in that one of the things we were told as 2012s strictly unofficially was well you’re having the fully grounded course, those that have been streamed into the businesses probably won’t get as good training as you and you will be more desirable. What am I, I’ve no idea, I’m TPDP2012-and-a-half. Support all these motions please. [Laughter]

**Tony Wallace**

[Inaudible] Thank you. Eugene

**Eugene Mitchell**

Eugene Mitchell from Glasgow Centre urging you to support all of the motions. I think the this block of three motions in particular Tony I think they’re a great illustration of why we need to carry forward the consultation and the engagement that was sought in the earlier in the first block of substantive motions, that we were looking at. This Amy’s comment you know what is the point, that perfectly illustrates the point that Graham was making about the need to have actually some strategic thought going into this, rather than reacting to particular needs at any particular point in time and I think one of the things that you know we could usefully do is maybe steal a line from Tom Farmer you know and encourage you know when we are engaging with the Tax Academy with other stakeholders as well you know we really want to target our values, not value our targets, you know we want to be looking at what is it that we want to achieve long term for this organisation and do the get the engagement right in order to deliver that so I would urge everyone please to support these motions.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Eugene. Any other speakers to the motion zz I don’t oh yeah, go on,

**Stewart McKie**

Last minute change of heart. I’m fully in support of the motions Stewart McKie Liverpool Centre. I’m a recent trainee and so last time I was at AGM I was speaking as a trainee and I guess I’m echoing the sentiments because I get it in the ear from from my girlfriend who’s a TSP2013 and she’s on the CT stream and I think there’s two other points that haven’t been raised that are probably worth mentioning I think it’s about accountability as much as anything. Two changes that have recently been made compared to when I did the course, first that accountancy has been bolted on as an additional module they were under the impression that they had you know last exam would be in august great I’ve got this milestone to work to and then all of a sudden for whatever reason business business driving it there’s a an additional exam bolted on and obviously that just adds to the pressure that’s point one. Point two is most people would say that the distributions exam or the tax case exam is the hardest, the distributions exam used to be two papers and it’s now turned into three as they’ve added more material. I think that having been a trainee and having done that exam that’s an unacceptable amount of pressure it’s an unacceptable amount of exams to do over a single sitting, and HMRC should be held to account for those decisions made, whether or not they get changed is another thing but we need to make sure that going forward those sort of things don’t happen. The training course is stressful enough as it is, we need to streamline it where possible and where possible as well we should be looking at moving courses away from being examined into sort of TPQ learning. Thank you.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Stewart.

**Paul Hodge**

I’m Paul the Liverpool trainee in VAT. I support the motions but I did want to add a big however. A lot of the conversation seems to sound a bit like well we should have CT grade 7s but do we actually need the VAT EC IT to be grade 7s. And that’s a view as a [inaudible] VAT HO and having spoken to EC HOs and Os is quite prevalent in the department that CT see themselves as better and they didn’t want to others there. So it’s just a although we need to get the clarity we also need to make sure we’re not trying to suggest that we shouldn’t have the grade 7s in these regimes we just need some clarity on the course.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Paul. Fran?

**Fran Hunter**

My name’s Frances Hunter I’m on Committee. For my sins I work in Tax Academy and I’m one of the designers so all you trainees who hate your course come and see me later and I’ll have a talk with you about the stuff that we write, I’m one of the writers rather than a tutor. I’m supporting all these motions, it’s a mess where I sit as well. The thing I’d like to just say is that ARC’s a professional association of tax professionals as well as a union and I think that that needs to be put to the masters at Tax Academy who who we’ve got quite a lot of DWP people in Tax Academy so they’re coming from a different background and I think it’s important that as we’re talking to them we bring out that this is a professional matter not we’re not looking at it as a the old style union issue it’s a professional association matter that we’re protecting the professional the profession of tax really. That’s what we want to that’s what we want to protect and they need we need to get it right.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Fran. I don’t see any more speakers. No, I think I don’t think there was any opposition to the motions but just before we do move to the vote this is something that is very important to ARC and has always been important to ARC and frankly there should be no real difference between what we want for our members and what HMRC wants for its people we all want a professional organisation and this is one of the areas where we can work well together with the organisation, should they be willing to do so. I’ll put the the motions to the vote then and I’ll stop this buzzing for a moment. So

So motion 14 first please, all those in favour could you please show.

Any against?

It’s clearly carried.

*Motion 14: Carried*

Motion 15 please show.

Any against?

Again clearly carried.

*Motion 15: Carried*

And motion 16 in the name of West Midlands could you please show please?

Thank you again that’s carried nem con.

*Motion 16: Carried*

Thank you very much for that, that was a good debate. Can we move on to motion 17 standing in the name of West Midlands please.

*Motion 17*

*17. That this AGM instructs Committee to engage with HMRC on the impact a diminishing Grade 6 resource will have on development programmes. We note that streaming is now an integral element of the training programme and TSPs are likely to have Grade 7 management throughout the programme with little or no Grade 6 input at any time. Currently final year trainees on TPDP have Grade 6 Business Learning Manager in their line of business. The presence and support of these experienced colleagues is a key driver to the successful and rounded development of all trainees particularly during the latter stages of the programme.*

 *West Midlands Centre*

**Leah White**

Hi my name’s Leah White I’m from the West Midlands Centre I’m a TPDP2012 trainees trainee. This motion’s for the Committee to engage with HMRC on the impact it’s mentioned grade 6 resource will have on development programmes. We understand that with the TSP course there is less grade 6s involved with the trainees and as a TPDP12 currently working on my final report being supported into promotion and things like that I have a grade 6 manager who’s been really invaluable in my progression and I think other TPDP12s feel the same so, that’s all I’ve got to say about it.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Leah. Any other speakers to the motion? Ok I’ll move us straight to the vote then please. Those in favour please show.

And any against?

That’s clearly carried.

*Motion 17: Carried*

Motion 18 in the name of the North East please.

*Motion 18*

*18. That this AGM recognises the significant time and costs spent by HMRC in recruiting new TSP trainees. However, where a TSP trainee comes off the course for any reason in the first two years, they do not currently get considered for O or HO roles that may be available. This AGM therefore calls on Committee to address this by asking the Department to change the process for trainees leaving the course in their first two years, to ensure they are considered for any available O and HO grade jobs in their area.*

*North East Centre*

**Johnny Waters**

Afternoon. I’m Johnny Waters from the North East it’s my first time at AGM [applause] Just to give you a bit of context on this. The main issues causing disgruntlement among some TSP15s result in the motion regarding job security exam difficulty pay scale and the strenuousness of having to demonstrate grade 7 competencies within the first two years. The TSP15 recruitment process resulted in both TSPs and HO graduates being recruited, an HO graduate recruit was one who just missed out for the top 250 performers this time last year. Yes they are [inaudible] a programme as ours but they will be later able to apply for the ATSP, they sit very similar exams to ours but will have written papers they’re also only required to complete 12 months work before being guaranteed permanency. In comparison to the two years a TSP must complete. The HO graduates start on higher pay, complete similar though not as difficult training and have sooner job security. The open competition process of TSP HO graduate recruitment has resulted in those of lower merit being rewarded more. TSP trainees are concerned that if they were to double fail a module before year three of the course they will be shown the door. However if they have demonstrated the ability to work at O/HO level and there are vacancies in their region they should be considered, especially given the recruitment and retention issues facing the department at the moment. The investment HMRC has already put in them wouldn’t be completely wasted. Please support the motion.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you. Are there any speakers to the motion? No I’m going to move us to the vote then. All those in favour please?

And any against?

No that’s clearly carried.

*Motion 18: Carried*

Colleagues we’re running a wee bit ahead of time which is fantastic but I’m going to tell. Yeah? Before we move on the next piece of business which is around Building Our Future I think there’s an opportunity for Helen Baird Parker to say a few words about what’s been happening with our equal pay cases and before she does so, I think it’s worth a wee round of applause, Helen’s work on this has been absolutely fabulous.

**Helen Baird Parker**

Thank you that’s very kind. Yep. I wanted to give an update to AGM on the recent hearing that we had in the equal pay cases. It’s a really big issue for our union and I know it’s something that everybody’s keen to hear about , I know that we’ve got some of the claimants and comparators here today so Thank you very much to them.

The background to these cases is quite long. In preparing for today I was looking back over my file and we first asked the department for information in relation to our claimants in 2012 and then we issued grievances for four women and then six women in 2013 and then we lodged our cases almost exactly two years ago now, in April 2014 and it’s taken until now to get our first hearing so it’s a very slow process. And I’m afraid we’re still quite a long way from a negotiated settlement which is what we’re hoping to achieve out of all of this.

The hearing that we had in mid March it’s a preliminary hearing so it’s not it’s only the first step in a series of hearings even if we win here we’ll still have to have a further hearing which will determine the cases themselves to find out whether women in HMRC are suffering indirect pay discrimination. The preliminary hearing is to determine whether women in HMRC are at a particular disadvantage in the pay system. The way that the way that equal pay indirect discrimination is is established is if there’s a provision criterion or practice which operates to the detriment of women and for us we’re saying that that is length of service. So for our claimants we’re seeking to compare women who are at the minimum or near the minimum with men who are on the maximum. The women in themselves objectively have quite a long length of service they’ve got say eight or ten years of service but they’re still in the bottom two deciles of the pay scale compared to the men who have got a bit longer length of service who’ve had the benefit of better pay systems pay rounds than ours who have made it to the max in a quicker time.

So the hearing itself went really really well I think it went as well as we we could possibly hope it could have gone. But there’s a slight niggle in that the law is in a state of flux in this area and so it’s quite likely that whatever happens as the outcome of this appeal there’s going to be of this hearing rather there will be an appeal either by us or by HMRC and we’ll have to resolve this preliminary point before we can even get to the point of determining whether our women have been discriminated against. So the hearing the first day was all witness evidence we heard from Tony at length and [laughter]

**Tony Wallace**

[Inaudible]

**Helen Baird Parker**

And Terry Cook and also our expert Alison Hall. I’m afraid I wasn’t able to attend on that day because it was on the day of the budget which was you know it couldn’t have been worse timing actually for some of us. But I’ve heard all about it from Tony and we think it went it was very successful. They asked him lots of really good questions and he was able to get in some really good points. They asked him about I think that the barrister was trying to make the point that isn’t this just a temporary problem you know there’ll be other pay rounds and the problem will correct itself and Tony was able to point out well we know what our pay settlement is for the next five years because it’s been announced by the government so no it’s not going to be sorted out any time soon. And Terry, Terry Cook explained what our pay systems have been over over the since merger and before merger. Then our expert witness Alison Hall she’s really expert in her field and I think everybody agreed that she came across really well and she explained our case very well. Their expert witness is very senior in the Office of National Statistics and so that’s what can happen IO think when you go up against the government that they have their choice of experts but apparently he didn’t come across very well at all. He was really prickly and aggressive and abrasive and our counsel had real difficulty in getting him to agree anything at all even the most anodyne of statements so he kind of we hope sort of slightly benefitted our case. He was very difficult we think and he just refused to be drawn on any really simple points about whether any facts were really facts so that was all to the benefit.

On Wednesday I did attend and I heard the back end of HMRC’s pay policy witness which was Kerry Black and that was interesting I heard counsel challenging her on some points which we’ve been discussing at length which are if lots of people retire who are currently on their maximum will that change the pay system because in effect will it level down so that there won’t be so much disadvantage any more, we challenged them on that point because we know that lots of people aren’t going to retire because HMRC couldn’t cope if everybody retired immediately tomorrow and there will still be plenty of people paid the range maximum so there will still be a disparity and women will still be disproportionately at the bottom.

So coming on to the legal submissions, what we’re actually arguing about here is is what we what we’re supposed to compare to what. We say that we want to compare women on the minimum with men on the maximum but HMRC says no that’s all wrong, you can only compare people who started on the same day. So you can’t compare people with different length of service because that would be an unfair comparison. The reason why they want to do that is obvious, it makes the difference look a lot smaller. But even if you do compare men and women with equal length of service, women still come out 2% lower and they have done year on year it’s not narrowing and that continues to be the case and has been the case even since before merger. So even on that actually we say that it’s disadvantageous.

There was a lot of obfuscation I think from their side, they want to make it look as complicated as possible, they’re saying that we can’t seek to have people put at a particular point in the pay scale, that that’s not their actual pay, somehow that isn’t what women are actually being paid when we say of course that is what they’re being paid, that’s the money that they’re taking home. So we’re arguing about the distribution really and we say that women are lagging disproportionately behind men in the pay scale and they’re much disproportionately clustered at the bottom compared to men and that there’s no way to move through.

There is a slight wrinkle, although all of this was very successful and we think that the judge was with us he was asking really good questions and he said at one point when the other side’s QC was going through all of this and saying oh you really mustn’t pay any attention to all of these statistics because they’re just an interesting data point I think is what he called it, and the judge said OK well that’s interesting but these figures are really quite striking so why is it that you’re saying that we shouldn’t take any notice of it. So we think that the judge is is with us, but there was unfortunately a Court Of Appeal decision quite recently on a similar point on indirect pay discrimination called Naeem and it’s it’s unfortunately made there are some obiter remarks in that decision which would seem to go against what we’re arguing here it seems to import an element of direct discrimination into indirect discrimination which is to say that there has to be some cause here about there has to be something specific about women that means that they’re getting paid less. We say of course that that’s not the right analysis that’s direct discrimination but the law is in a state of flux. This Court of Appeal decision Naeem is likely to go to the Supreme Court in September or October and our decision is likely to come out in about two months’ time. So what that means is that either way it looks like there’ll be an appeal because we’ll we’ll need to test the law after the Naeem decision comes out.

So the judge did indicate at the end of the hearing that it’s going to take him quite some time to do this it’s really complex statistical stuff and he said it was going to take him longer than usual. Usual is about a month apparently in the employment tribunal that’s quite a lot quicker than the tax tribunal [laughter] so it’s all news to me. But we think it will be at least another month and possibly longer because the judge indicated also that he had some leave coming up. So I guess my message is that we think it went really really well it went as well as can be expected but it’s the it’s just one of the first steps on a really long road and we just don’t expect HMRC to roll over on this one and to give us a negotiated pay settlement which is what we’re hoping for obviously, but you know watch this space.

I’ve got time to take some questions I think if anybody wants to ask anything about the hearing?

**Tony Wallace**

A couple of minutes Helen yeah.

[Inaudible]

**Helen Baird Parker**

No it’s the point when we lodged the claims is the kind of relevant time point for these claims and so I think that you can go back six years there’s the period of limitation, so that it relates to those particular claims though. So what will happen in respect of everybody else it’s a little bit uncertain. If we win and everything goes our way and we get a finding of indirect discrimination against these women then of course the next step would be that we would bring forward claims on behalf of all of the other women who haven’t been the claimants and we’d try to get the same thing for them. And then hopefully we could try to do the same for men saying well ok well what about these women we’ll compare to them. But those are all sort of very much next step issues and it really depends upon what happens and that’s kind of a one way that it could go. The better solution for everybody would be if HMRC goes ok we accept that our pay system is discriminatory and we’re going to fic it, we’re going to go back to the Treasury we’re going to ask for more money because we’ve got a discriminatory pay system and we need to correct it. And then hopefully then we get a negotiated pay settlement and what that looks like of course we’ll argue that it should be backdated and it should reflect whatever those claims say. But I guess it’s really uncertain and it depends which way this goes.

**Tony Wallace**

Our position is always to try to get to negotiating position rather than using the court using the courts it’s a lot less expenses for everybody involved but up to this point we’ve not seen any appetite for it. Can take possibly one more then I think we’re going to have to move on. Sarah.

**Sarah Guerra**

I haven’t got a question actually I just wanted to reiterate what Tony said. I was in ARC Committee at the start of this it’s quite a shock to me to hear that four years I’ve been in three jobs since then and I just wanted to say thank you very much to the ARC team particularly to Helen because I know she she has a very busy day job and is taking this forward with the team but is the driving force and I think it’s really really worth congratulating whether we win or lose, the fact that we’re taking this fight is really admirable.

[Applause]

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Sarah. Just before we do move on, one person who I don’t think got mentioned was Terry. Did we mention Terry? Just to mention Terry. Was Terry mentioned? My apologies. Obviously I’d nodded off, so.

**Helen Baird Parker**

I’d just like to say though it’s so important to us and we will fight this we will fight this all the way because we believe that this is a discriminatory pay system and that you all deserve to be paid fairly and equally so HMRC is not supporting your interests but we will support your interests.

**Tony Wallace**

Exactly. Thank you very much. Now bring us back onto the agenda please we now have a block of motions on Building Our Future (Buildings) the first three, there are three motions that we’ll be taking in common debate so I’ll ask a mover for motion 19 in the name of Legal & Governance please.

# Building Our Future (Buildings)

*Motion 19*

*19. (\*)This AGM expresses concern about HMRC's new locations and buildings. We are very concerned at the additional time that we need to be spent travelling for no extra benefit. The cost of the change will be borne by staff, and many simply may not be able to move. We are also concerned that the new buildings may actually turn out to be nowhere near good transport links, as promised, making journeys even longer.*

*We welcome the opportunity to work in new fit for purpose offices but are concerned that the new offices may not be fit for purpose after all, in that they may not have facilities for staff such as canteens and gyms, which will be especially important if staff are now required to travel very long distances to work, at the expense of their own free time with potentially detrimental effects on their wellbeing.*

*Further, AGM notes the benefit which will be derived from being fully collocated, and is disappointed that ExCom have decided not to be collocated with their staff.*

*AGM instructs Committee to continue to press for adequate locations and facilities for HMRC staff, including touch down office space for those staff with specialist job roles such as those required to attend the Courts and Tribunals on a regular basis.*

*Legal & Governance Centre*

**Helen Baird Parker**

It’s actually me again. [Laughter] Hello. I’m on behalf of Legal & Governance this time around. Ok. So moving motion 19 which is about buildings and locations. There are three aspects to the motion. It’s about the new offices themselves and where are they and are we going to be able to get to them, it’s about the time that we’re all going to spend travelling to these new offices wherever they may be, and it’s also about who’s in the office with us. There are clearly benefits to us all having nice new shiny offices, we can see that and being co-located with each other. However there are obviously really serious concerns for many of us. And not only for colleagues who won’t be able to travel to new offices at all and there’s a lot of uncertainty for for a lot of colleagues around the country at the moment. For those of us that are moving we’re just concerned that this seems to be all a one way street, that all of the benefit here is to HMRC and that it’s at our expense. It’s at our personal and financial expense and that we’ll take the brunt in terms of the time spent travelling, in terms of our costs that aren’t going to be reimbursed things like childcare costs additional childcare, home moves assistance which is not available if people have to move house. We’re just really disappointed that HMRC is not planning to take things like this into account and that it’s only RDT which seems to be the thing that’s being taken into account.

I’m also really disappointed that HMRC’s not discussing any of the diversity aspects of this with us, I should say that in my Committee role as the diversity officer, I’m not having any conversations on the diversity aspects whatsoever and that’s really disappointing and I really hope that they will come and discuss these things because there are obvious issues for people with caring responsibilities people with disabilities all sorts of other issues which are not being discussed with HMRC at the moment because they just don’t they’re just refusing to discuss it with me. So there’s a bit of uncertainty as to where our new offices will be, if they’re genuinely going to be near transport links, it’s worrying for people if they have to move house the high cost of housing in the south east is a real problem for people and we’re just dismayed that this just doesn’t seem to be a fair offer for us that it’s at our expense that we have to do this.

Finally as a minor point we think that ExCom should be should have a presence in the new Stratford office with us because what other organisation doesn’t have its top team with the other employees we just think that you know separating them off is is not good for us. Please support.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Helen. Motion 20 in the name of Legal & Governance? Jeremy.

*Motion 20*

*20. (\*)This AGM notes that large numbers of HMRC buildings are scheduled for closure under the Building Our Future programme, and that as the date for closure approaches the commercial incentives for Mapeley to spend money on essential maintenance and necessary repair works to these buildings will be diminished. These buildings will nevertheless continue to be HMRC workplaces until their closure dates, and the wellbeing of HMRC staff will continue to depend upon their being provided with a safe and healthy workplace. Committee is therefore instructed to press the Board to hold Mapeley to the terms of the building management contract in respect of every existing HMRC building right up until its scheduled closure date, and not to tolerate the fact of impending closure being used as an excuse for inadequate or non-existent building maintenance.*

*Legal & Governance Centre*

**Jeremy Burrows**

Jeremy Burrows Legal & Governance moving motion 20. Motion 20 is about squalor. Motion 20 is about the unpleasantness of coming to work every day knowing that when something breaks down nothing is going to be done to fix it. When one of the lifts breaks down you just have to soldier on with too few lifts. When the blinds are broken you’ve got to put up with the glare on your screen, because everyone knows we’re moving out and nobody cares. Well we’ve paid Mapeley to care. We’ve given them plenty of money to take off to their offshore havens and enjoy tax free as they wish, and their obligation in return is to make sure that you and me and everyone in this department has a decent proper workplace to work in, right up to the moment that we depart. That is what this motion is about and I ask you to support it.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Jeremy. Motion 21 in the name of Glasgow.

*Motion 21*

*21. (\*) That this AGM recognises HMRC’s commitment to employing a diverse workforce that represents the community we serve and welcomes the potential for regional centres to provide rewarding and varied careers for all staff. Ensuring that consideration is given to the design of regional centres such that they can accommodate the needs of our diverse work force will allow HMRC to retain and to attract a wide range of talented people to lead the organisation into the future.*

*This AGM instructs Committee to work with HMRC to ensure that appropriate consideration is given to the design of regional centres such that colleagues with additional needs are not disadvantaged by working in them and such that HMRC is in a strong position to build on its reputation as an inclusive organisation going forward.*

*Glasgow Centre*

**Iona Stevenson**

Hello I’m Iona Stevenson from Glasgow and this is my first meeting. [Applause]. So echoing comment made in motion 19 I’m here to talk about diversity and I’m dismayed to hear that this is not a conversation that has already begun. So. Regional Centres present a significant opportunity to ensure that our estate is fit for purpose for all of our staff. While we’ve heard frequently that provision of facilities needed Regional Centres will be reliant on the budget that is available at the time, it’s important that we act now to identify the principles that are going to underpin the design of these Centres and to ensure that HMRC is committed to those same principles. The move to Regional Centres will provide yes they will provide a multitude of challenges even for staff within reasonable daily travel. The availability of disabled parking bays, the provision of quiet workspaces for colleagues with autistic spectrum disorder, the many adjustments that my untrained eye is not bet placed to identify, so we can not allow these vital features to fall prey to the threat of budgetary constraints or to just a lack of conversation. We need to do all that we can to ensure that the discussion of provision of facilities for colleagues with additional needs does not fall from the agenda. So if HMRC is to retain and to build on its reputation as an inclusive organisation then ARC now must commit to getting that conversation started.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Iona. I’ll move motions 19, 20 and 21 into common debate if I have some speakers on the motions and remember please indicate if you’re for or against the motions at the start. I’ll take Eugene then Steve.

**Eugene Mitchell**

Eugene Mitchell from Glasgow Centre speaking in support of the motions particularly in support of motion 21 and you know dismayed that Glasgow around the lack of the lack of consultation at the centre there you’re absolutely right Iona it’s not good at all and we need to try and get that done that I think that reflects back on some of the earlier discussions that we’ve had about the how difficult it seems to be to get consultation and engagement going. But one of the things that we can do and one of the things that everybody in this room can do and can encourage members and colleagues everywhere, is to have those discussions in the local areas as well as we go to work towards building these Regional Centres so that we can ensure the conversations around diversity diversity issues are included in here. You’ve all got opportunities to contribute towards the regional implementation groups and you might hear some scare stories but the reality is if you approach your regional implementation lead just get the message across to them there are some of us in this room that sit on some of these groups and we will and are taking these issues forward. But we need to be do we need everybody to be doing this we can’t just rely on Committee people we need people locally that are going to be in those Regional Centres insisting that we build the best future that we can for everybody, so please support this motion.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Eugene. Steve?

**Steve Dodd**

Steve Dodd Leeds Centre. Some of you may know there was a flood in Shipley and quite a lot of Yorkshire and northern England on Boxing day. And Shipley was one of the offices that was closed and there are several lessons out of that. We don’t even have a date by which we know the date for return so we’re still all displaced. 1100 colleagues, some working at home some working in other buildings. There are three lessons there for us. That Regional Centres will require a contingency were that to happen in future so there’s an opportunity there at a real, ExCom have taken an interest in it, they’ve awarding us £40 each for the disruption so I feel really good about that although we we it took two days to work out how we were going to be awarded £40 each so but that’s a practical lesson that ExCom taken things the reason that someone can put their size elevens in the door on that one. Secondly that the displacement to odd parts of Leeds and other buildings has brought out all the diversity issues that Helen raised, so we’ve got practical issues there. I know there’s a motion later on from Hull about the other issue for people, it’s a relatively local area and there’s still there are already issues emerging and because of PMR people are afraid to raise them. So again another door to put the size elevens in or nines [inaudible]. And also that there’s evidence that we have very little control over what estates are doing. Hence the not knowing a date about a date that’s for Jeremy’s point. So there are three practical issues there. My experience of the regional implementation groups is not the same as Eugene’s. It’s very hard to understand how that’s going that’s the next block of motions about how to get good governance structures in there. So again that could be a fourth lesson as well coming out of that. So let’s raise the Shipley flood or let’s raise the issue created by the Shipley flood as a practical example that we can use to say what are you going to do about that, you’ve got something that’s actually happened the people who’ve responded in the current environment have done so magnificently so let’s not have any talk that you’re undermining them, but what are you going to do. These are things that we have to provide an answer to there. Ok so I obviously sorry at the end rather than the beginning Tony support all those motions.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Steve. The end’ll do. [Laughter] For just for you. Vicky.

**Vicky Johnson**

Vicky Johnson Committee supporting all three motions, comment about motion 20 Jeremy feel your pain on lifts, City Centre House in Birmingham never has every single lift working, the building Responsible Senior Responsible Manager might come and tell you differently in a minute [laughter]. He’s at the front waiting to speak. There was one particular day we had a fire practice and one lift was working, I happened to be incident control officer and 1100 people had to walk up ten flights of stairs having been evacuated from the building, that was great fun. Motion 21 diversity. Those of you who’ve heard me speak before know that diversity is something I am very very keen on. I did chair the senior women’s network for some time, I do try very hard to make sure diversity is at the top of a lot of the agendas that I speak to. Not in to forget the other important things but diversity in Regional Centres is something that I’ve been thinking about very carefully and very hard, and on international women’s day in 2015 I ran an event where we designed a diversity proof Regional Centre and we sent all of our outputs from that and all of our thoughts on that to ESS, to the Building Our Future team, and to the head of diversity. So I will give you a commitment that yes we will try very very very hard to engage with HMRC on diversity but HMRC’s head of diversity needs to talk to us and just right now that doesn’t seem to be possible so Helen will get every support that she needs form Committee she will get every support from me, and we will try really really hard but HMRC needs to try hard back. Thank you.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Vicky. Paula? Ok.

**Paula Houghton**

Paula Houghton. I’ve got two hats on here so I need to make sure I say the right things in the right hats. With my Committee hat on we do have some talking going on on attendance and wellbeing and health and safety type issues with the new buildings so there is a possibility there to raise some diversity things it’s not defending we should be talking to one diversity space but there is there are some conversations. With my Norfolk and Suffolk Centre hat on I’m not quite sure where to start on this block of motions. The first meeting with the regional implementation leads somebody wanted to talk about how good the cafes would be in the new Regional Centres and when you’re dealing with a bunch of people who are every single one of them outside of reasonable daily travel the café facilities really are the least of their worries. Our Norwich colleagues couldn’t even get to the stepping stone site in Ipswich within reasonable daily travel so have all universally already been offered an exit package. In Ipswich almost everybody is over an hour from the proposed site in Stratford and we are working in a building I completely sympathise with Jeremy the squalor point is well made, we have three doors into the building two of them have been broken for over six months, we have escalators that might work once a week if you’re lucky, we only have one lift that goes down to the ground floor and we currently don’t have any disabled access to the building. It’s not good enough the department is very forward focused looking at these new Regional Centres but these are offices that are going to be open for a number of years to come and we really do need to be pushing for the contracts to be upheld and for people to be working in appropriate environments right up until the day we walk out, whether that be that we’re walking out the door for good or walking out the door to a Regional Centre but that comes under the motions later. Thank you.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Paula. I think I have the SRM from Birmingham wants [inaudible]. Duncan. [Laughter]

[inaudible]

**Tony Wallace**

Group SRM.

**Duncan Gleig**

Good morning. Duncan Gleig from West Midlands. This is my first conference in [inaudible] [laughter]. I’ve been group SRM in West Midlands now for about six weeks something like that, I’ve taken over from a pensioner [laughter]. There’s a couple of things I think you need to be aware of. One is estates, I don’t know if anybody from estates is here but they have a very difficult job and their organisation is terrible. It’s it’s such a mess I think partly because of the way that we have the contracts with all our various suppliers so I have a lot of sympathy for the people working in estates who have a lot of mud to get through just to get to anywhere they want to get to. I’ve tried to engage with them, they’re trying their best but it is very difficult. So this is the other point. We want to hold Mapeley to account and we can’t unless we report incidents. I did a health and safety check in City Centre House last week, that was great. This is the comment that worried me: we walked past someone’s desk said those blinds they look as if they’re broken, she said they are. I said have you reported it, she said no. I said why not, well because I hot desk. In other words it’s not my responsibility it’s somebody else’s. And the problem is if we all do that we will never get these things reported if we don’t get them reported we cannot hold them to account. So I want all of you to take that responsibility where you see things are not being done where you see things are not being fulfilled as part of the contract that they have to do for us, we must report it because there is no incentive for them otherwise. Thank you.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Duncan, that’s an excellent point. I don’t see any more speakers oh sorry yes go ahead

**Adi Bland**

Adi Bland Preston Centre again. Speaking roughly in support of all these motions although I will recite an anecdote that might be slightly contradictory to one of them. Particularly speaking about 20 here I know there’s a building I sometimes work out of in Bootle that has 19 floors and five lifts and for a few days last week there were two of those lifts actually working. The building that I’m nominally work in’s got concrete cancer had a piece of rebar fall out by the window at my desk the other day. We are reporting these problems, people are coming round but nothing seems to happen particularly quickly it took them six months to put a dozen tiles in the gents loo. On the subject of 19 and we’ve heard a lot of rhetoric about reasonable daily travelling, now unfortunately an awful lot of my members have already been displaced twice in order to end up in Preston, when Kendal was closed they moved an hour down the road into Lancaster. When Lancaster was closed they moved another half an hour down the road into Preston. And when we talk about reasonable daily travelling what we’re now being told is, well Manchester and Liverpool are only an hour from Preston that’s fine. But they’ll already travelling an hour and a half to get to Preston. And on the anecdote on that, and we’ve talked about the squalor that we have to work in, one of my members said to me a while ago that he’d sit on a milk crate in a draughty old warehouse if it meant he didn’t have to travel four and a half hours every day to get to work. Please support all these motions.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Adi. See any further speakers and I don’t think there was any opposition to the motion so there’s no right of reply. I’ll begin with motion 19 in the name of Legal & Governance all those in favour please show?

And those against?

Carried nem con.

*Motion 19: Carried*

Motion 20 in the name of Legal & Governance all those in favour please?

Thank you and any against?

Clearly carried.

*Motion 20: Carried*

And motion 21 in the name of Glasgow all those in favour please?

And against?

And again that is clearly carried. Thank you.

*Motion 21: Carried*

# Building Our Future (People Support)

**Tony Wallace**

I’ll move on to motion 22 in the name of Norfolk and Suffolk please. This is on Building Our Future (People Support).

*Motion 22*

*22. That this AGM instructs Committee to give a commitment that it will recruit, train and support a cadre of ARC representatives to help members with proposed office moves.*

*Norfolk & Suffolk Centre*

**Paula Houghton**

Paula Houghton again for Norfolk and Suffolk Centre. Motion 22 is an enabling motion really, our members in Norwich had a horrible time with their exit packages and I’ve been asked to express formal thanks to Tony Wallace by the members up there, he worked tirelessly to make sure that members were treated fairly in their exits and also to ensure, thank you [applause], and also to ensure that those who didn’t want to exit were also treated in the right way. What Norwich Centre what Norfolk and Suffolk Centre wanted to do with this motion really was to give Committee that support to and the steer to make sure that everybody who’s faced with these horrible decisions and these horrible moves gets the same level of support that colleagues in Norwich did because it was vital to keeping them, well, trusting in their union and feeling supported was so important to them in a horrible time of their careers. So that’s what this is about. Please support the motion.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Paula. Any speakers to motion 22? No I’ll move straight to the vote then. All those in favour?

And any against?

That’s clearly carried.

*Motion 22: Carried*

Motion 23 also in the name of Norfolk and Suffolk.

*Motion 23*

*23. That this AGM instructs Committee to ensure that any member invited to a 1-2-1 with their manager to discuss a proposed office move will be supported by an ARC representative and that an ARC representative will offer to attend meetings and appeals as requested by the member.*

*Norfolk & Suffolk Centre*

**Paula Houghton**

Me again. I’m the only one here so. This motion as written might have seemed a tiny bit controversial to some people so I’m going to sort of explain the background of it a little bit. The Centre fully understands the departmental policy of not having a union rep at every one-to-one meeting and also that ARC would struggle to find the resources to send a rep to every single one-to-one meeting. That wouldn’t necessarily be desirable. But this motion is partly about allowing members to register their protest about that decision that the department had a blanket decision to say that you can’t have your union rep at that meeting even if you feel you want them, and it’s demonstrating their frustration at that decision. It also kind of follows on from the last motion about ensuring that everyone gets the support that the members in Norwich received. Even if that’s not someone actually sitting in the meeting with them but having someone that they can speak to about the decisions about the one-to-one meetings and making sure that that they get that support and know what they need to do to get a decision out of the decision maker that is right for them. The Centre completely understands that we can’t provide a member at personal representation for every member but it is about making sure that ARC provides some support for every member or any member that wants it while they go through the one-to-one process. So please support the motion.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Paula. Andy?

**Andy Nixon**

Andy Nixon Glasgow Centre and I’ve been a personal caseworker for ten years. I was actually going to ask to remit this motion but I’ll support it on the basis of the the way it’s been explained. We don’t have the resources to talk to everybody through this and there’s a lot of people who the move to a Regional Centre won’t be a big issue. If it’s a hundred yards down the road they’re not going to need a lot of support. On the basis it’s support support wherever needed I fully support the motion.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Andy. Graham?

**Graham Flew**

Oh dear. Graham Flew Cambridge Centre. I agree with the sentiments, I agree with what Paula has said that they Norfolk and Suffolk wanted the motion to say. But it doesn’t say what Paula wants the motion to say, it says it instructs Committee to to ensure that any member invited to a one-to-one will be supported by an ARC representative. There’s two problems with that: we’re not invited and I don’t think we’ve got the resources to do it. I can’t oppose the motion, I mean goodness me why would I want to do that. I do want you to remit it please. You take the spirit back, we think it’s a good idea but we can’t deliver it.

**Tony Wallace**

There’s a call for remission from the hall so I’ll open up the debate on remission so be speaking to remission now before speaking to the substantive motion. Is there anyone wanting to speak to remission? Paula?

**Paula Houghton**

The Centre wouldn’t have any objections to remission, we do understand that the wording was should perhaps have been thought out a little better so yes we’re perfectly happy with remission because it retains what we want Committee to understand and what the spirit of what we wanted to convey to AGM. So we’d be happy with that.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you. Any other speakers on remission? No? Ok well I’ll move to a vote on remission and just to remind colleagues who are here for the first time. What remission effectively does is we take the spirit on board and apologies for the repetition but just so colleague are clear. We take the spirit of the motion on board and Committee will take it forward so the question before you now is conference, AGM even, accept prepared to accept the move for remission, could you please show if you’re in favour.

Thank you and any against?

One against. That motion is remitted. Thank you very much.

*Motion 23: Remitted*

# Building Our Future (Communications)

**Tony Wallace**

Ok we move now on to a further block of motions on Building Our Future this time on communications, there are four motions I’ll ask Leicester to move motion 24 first, I’ll take 25, 26 27 and then open up to common debate. Motion 24 please Leicester, Mike?

*Motion 24*

*24. (\*)That this AGM instructs ARC Committee to understand the various Business Streams' location strategies and ensure that the employer is clear when making announcements if they are Building our Future driven or not.*

*Further, all Building our Future locations announcements should be made sensitively and after notification to the Union, and Building our Future (where decisions have not yet been made) should not be used as an umbrella justification for other decisions.*

*Leicester Centre*

**Mike Simmons**

Mike Simmons Leicester Centre moving motion 24. Building our future sounds great in principle but it doesn’t half mean that people can say oh it’s a Building Our Future thing when they make all sorts of changes to your business stream. As just a little example, my building is due to shut in 2020/2021. When is my business stream going to move out then. That is going to be at some date between now and when my building shuts, and I would wager quite a lot of money it won’t be at the end of that time. Because it won’t suit the business to wait so there’s a lot of members who are potentially going to be disadvantaged by an early move because of Building Our Future when it’s not a Building Our Future thing, it’s a line of business thing. So the motion just asks that we understand what’s going on. I would urge you to support the motion. And just while I’m here can I say thank you to Amy Carr for her efforts for the 2012s being promoted as well, for the location [applause].

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Mike, motion just before I move on to motion 25 our guest speaker John Whiting has just arrived, I’m not calling you quite yet John I’ll give you ten minutes or so to catch your breath but we’ll hear from you shortly. Motion 25 please in the name of Leicester.

*Motion 25*

*25. (\*) That this AGM instructs ARC Committee to understand the line of communication between the Design Authority, the Regional Implementation Groups and the Estates Team and to inform members of this.*

*This AGM calls for ARC Committee to press to have sufficient involvement in these communications to safeguard the interests of ARC members.*

*Leicester Centre*

**Ashley Falla**

Ashley Falla Leicester Centre moving motion 25. It’s clear that as part of Building Our Future and the move to Regional Centres the design authority the regional implementation groups and the estates teams are key in understanding what the position will be in the future and how we get there. They will have a huge impact in coming up with the theoretical and logistical issues involved with moving this many staff to such a few Regional Centres. What this motion asks is that ARC is involved in all of those consultations, it understands what the line of communication is between those three groups, so that we’re aware of exactly how they communicate and we can make sure we’re involved at all parts. Thank you very much.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you. Moving on to motion 26 in the name of Liverpool.

*Motion 26*

*26. (\*) That this AGM instructs Committee to seek commitment from HMRC that it will provide full advice as to what entering the redeployment pool means for members, to include details on the picture of the redeployment pool in each office location.*

*Liverpool Centre*

**Stewart McKie**

Stewart McKie Liverpool Centre although I do work out of Bootle and do on occasion work out of Wrexham and I think redeployment is an unfortunate thing, redeployment pool is an unfortunate thing but it is something that’s going to be a reality for an awful lot of people. I think that HMRC Building Our Future is about consolidation and I think for a lot of staff it’s about upheaval and we need to make sure that we can assist those that are going to bear the burden of that upheaval in the best way that we can. These can be people that are moving to the Regional Centre but they don’t have a set job, or it could be people that are unable or unwilling to move to a Regional Centre. These people these people have committed their their careers to HMRC they’ve got a lot of skills and I think HMRC needs to needs to recognise and needs to repay those that have committed to HMRC and who will bear the brunt of that burden. There are some local initiatives that I’m aware of in Wrexham where they’re looking at skillsets of those of those members of staff in Wrexham and looking at whether they’ll have the skills appropriate for other jobs not just in HMRC but also across the public sector, there is a new prison opening in Wrexham for example. So those sort of local initiatives that focus on skills and knowledge should certainly be applauded and extended where possible but I really think that skills is only one side of the coin, the other side of the coin is about information and HMRC through Building Our Future is trying to be very forward looking but we need to think more about the redeployment pool. People need to know what the options are, and we need transparency as soon as possible on it. Please support the motion.

**Tony Wallace**

 Thank you Stewart. Next motion is motion 27 in the name of Hull. I was looking for you Mr Fairbanks. Can you see, it’s the hair.

*Motion 27*

*27. (\*) That this AGM calls on ARC Committee to press HMRC to publish the data and computer modelling undertaken that formed the basis for Lin Homer’s statement to the Public Accounts Committee that HMRC believe that over 90% of its workforce is within reasonable daily travel of the regional centres.*

*Hull Centre*

**Paul Fairbank**

Afternoon everyone, Paul Fairbank from Hull speaking on motion 27. As you’re all as anyone who has been here before will be aware I always try and have some sort of theme to my speeches whether it’s impressions, gameshow, wrapped around Monty Python’s Life of Brian, so actually this one I’m going to go with jokes. So. Why did the CRM cross the road? Actually I can’t tell you that now because I’ve moved from SME to LB so I can’t give you an answer there.

How many members of ExCom does it take to change a light bulb? Again if you come out and see me later on I’m drunk I’ve got the answer for that one. Again.

Jimmy Carr Ken Dodd and Tony Wallace walk into a bar.. No, again. Actually it’s no it’s not laughing matter when you’re looking at RDT for staff that are outside of reasonable daily travel. Hull’s a small site with only about fifteen or sixteen ARC members and I’m sure anyone else who’s who did the announcement in November like I did will testify how hard it is when you’re talking to people and saying that the office is going to be closing. Our concern is the first round of Building our future stated there was an 80/20 split then [inaudible] went before the pack and said basically 90% of our staff were within reasonable daily travel and it wouldn’t be detrimental to our ability to deliver I mean anyone, is there anyone in from KAI today? Just the one. I was going to say, I’[m going to ask you, could everyone who is outside reasonable daily travel as in an hour, and I’m not going to get into this ‘about an hour’ because we all know it’s you know when you used to book a holiday and it was a stone’s throw from the beach [laughter] so, could I just have a show of hands for everyone who’s outside of reasonable daily travel, I know it’s not statistically valid for yourself but what are we talking? That’s definitely over 10% of us and I know they might turn round and say yeah you’re grade 7s and above are more willing to travel because of their career but I think what we need to do is just question this, I mean as I say the people in Hull there’s only a small band of us we’re all compliance trained and basically question is, we just want open and honesty and transparency as to where these figures came from. The motion speaks for itself. Thank you.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Paul. I can’t wait to hear the punchline when we’re walking into the bar.

[Inaudible]

**Paul Fairbank**

You should get a round in.

**Tony Wallace**

I’ll remember that later. Ok we’ve had four motions 24 through to 27 I’ll open them up into common debate. Any contributions from the floor? Dave. Dave Cooper.

**David Cooper**

David Cooper speaking on behalf of Committee in supporting Paul and Hull’s motion regarding this 90%. I’m glad somebody from KAI’s here, can you come down and explain it to us at some point perhaps? I watch listen to a programme on Radio Four called More or Less which spends a lot of time debunking numbers. I suspect they won’t have much of a problem with this one. If you look at it 10% represents around about 5,500 people. That’s a lot in itself but actually saying 5,500 people would be outside of RDT so effectively they’re going to be made redundant. But then you start to look at it. North East. I know for a fact Middlesbrough has got nearly 300 people, GSH George Stephenson House has got nearly 300 people, Washington’s got 2,000 quite a lot of them are outside of RDT. Let’s go to Yorkshire. Hull has got people. Sheffield’s got people. Let’s move round the country. Scotland. Yeah well Scotland’s shutting down. Inverness is nowhere near anything, is it Blair. Preston we’ve already said Preston there’s a lot of people there who’re not within RDT. Swansea, Port Talbot, none of them. The whole of the south coast, Portsmouth, Brighton, I reckon I could come up with quite a few more than 5,500 people just by being on the back of a fag packet. So why has the department come up with 90%, why aren’t they explaining it to us, why are they hiding that figure from us, and why do they insist that it is still true. To quote Jim Rogers our illustrious colleague over there, it’s all bollocks. [Laughter] [Applause].

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you. And [inaudible] Dave.

**David Cooper**

Yeah I’ve got another one to come.

**Tony Wallace**

You’ll no get back.

**Vicky Johnson**

Vicky Johnson Committee. Supporting all of the motions but I’d like to thank Ashley for bringing motion 25. I’ve seen some of the governance I can’t understand it, I’ve asked for somebody to explain it to me in words of one syllable, when we get the answer we will share it but I cannot understand it at the moment so yes we will work on that.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Vicky. Any other speakers to the motions? I don’t see any and I didn’t hear any oh Paula, Paula.

**Paula Houghton**

Sorry I was just trying to actually call up the information from the ARC survey. We conducted a survey earlier on in the year and almost a thousand members responded to that survey which is a fantastic response and thank you to anybody who did. I just wanted to make the point actually on the the 90% figure that when we asked people how long their journey to work was to their current office around two thirds of respondents were within reasonable daily travel. And we asked people about journeys to their proposed Regional Centre that figure was reversed and two thirds of people were outside of reasonable daily travel. We know it’s not a statistically significant survey because it’s not a random sample, but it is statistically important that a thousand of our members responded to that survey and gave us those figures so thank you for responding and we can we are using those figures when we’re talking to the department. I couldn’t quite call them up to give you quick enough to give you the actual figures but it is really important for us that we got that information from members because it gives us those numbers to go back to the department with.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Paula. I’ll move to a vote then, I didn’t hear anything in opposition so I don’t think there’s a right of reply. Start with motion 24 in the name of Leicester please all those in favour?

And any against?

It’s clearly carried.

*Motion 24: Carried*

25 also in the name of Leicester. All those in favour? Thank you. Again clearly carried.

*Motion 25: Carried*

Motion 26 in the name of Liverpool all those in favour?

Thank you. Clearly carried.

*Motion 26: Carried*

And motion 27 in the name of Hull. All those in favour?

Thank you. Any against? I should really ask shouldn’t I.

Clearly carried. Thank you

*Motion 27: Carried*

# John Whiting, Office of Tax Simplification

We’re bang on time now and it gives me great pleasure to introduce our first guest speaker John Whiting. In recent years ARC has tried to do an awful lot of work around raising our political profile, this started under Graham Black’s presidency, carried on through Gareth’s and has carried on through mine. It’s important that we are seen amongst the professions and with politicians and the NGOs to show that we do an effective and great job for the country which is exactly what we do. We’ve hosted a number of parliamentary events and tax transparency resourcing dealing with the professional skills of our members and our next guest John is a regular attender at those events and has been a good friend to ARC over a number of years where we’ve been looking for people to battle our corner for sufficient resource.

What I will say about John is at our last event in Parliament he did make the point that he was a head of a Revenue service on the board of a Revenue service that has no post in hand, and I was rather staggered and impressed by that but he only has 46 people in Revenue Scotland so he was blowing his trumpet a wee bit too much.

John’s a non-executive director of HMRC he’s on the board of Revenue Scotland and most notably he is the Tax Director in the Office Of Tax Simplification. He was previously the Tax Policy Director I think it was John wasn’t it

**John Whiting**

It said on the agenda yes.

**Tony Wallace**

Did it? Yeah. The institute of Chartered Institute Of Taxation and he was also tax partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers. Are you ready John?

**John Whiting**

Still trying to find the

**Tony Wallace**

Shall I keep talking?

**John Whiting**

Keep talking, you’re doing it well. You’ve only got 28 minutes to go so

**Tony Wallace**

I’ll gie ye a song {laughter]. Oh don’t! [laughter]. That’s me run out of things to say.

**John Whiting**

[Inaudible]

**Tony Wallace**

So when I walked into the bar with that Jimmy Carr guy what happened then? Anybody want to hear about my dad and the shipbuilders?

[Inaudible]

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you. With sincere apologies to John Whiting, over to you.

[Applause]

**John Whiting**

That’s alright no apologies needed, Thank you very much and thanks very much for the opportunity to speak and could I start out by saying that this is a first for ARC isn’t it that you’ve had two successive speakers from Hull.

**Tony Wallace**

Yes I think it might be. Don’t get him started but

**John Whiting**

It’s a great ploy you know, great privilege to follow somebody else from Hull it doesn’t often happen but hey we we get everywhere we’ve got to try and colonise the place. Thanks for the opportunity to come and say a few words. The idea was just to give you a bit of an intro if you need it or an update those of you who know us on what the OTS is up to. What we do and all the rest of it. Or indeed what we don’t do. Clearly various people have suggested that with all the stories in the papers at the moment the OTS has obviously been doing its work in Panama, I can actually deny that. But we’ll willing to have a go.

So what are we doing. Well let’s just have a little contextual word for the moment if, hello that’s pretty good isn’t it. Heck. Sorry let’s try again. Treasury laptops. Don’t work very well.

[Inaudible]

Yeah. I think that’s the theory. You’ve probably seen stats like that. About numbers games and I don’t know if any I mean I’m willing to have a recount on those but [laughter] I mean probably an underestimate I don’t know, but the what might be interesting is obviously to sort of draw the graph of plotting the rate of growth of the words as well because we here, you know, the OTS we’re trying to simplify that but the best analogy I’ve got for our job is thanks to the late Lord Howe who said that tax simplification is like repainting Brighton pier while somebody else is extending it to France. [Laughter]. The only trouble is at the moment I feel as if it’s being extended to China never mind France. But anyway. That is a sort of light hearted. Slightly more seriously and this is for those of you who’ve perhaps never heard of us or don‘t really know what we do. What are we, we are in strictness an independent office of HMT. We are being set up on a statutory basis in the current Finance Bill and there’s obviously a slight irony there that people have the view that what we’re here for is to reduce the amount of legislation but we’re going to have our own six or seven pages of legislation, so everything has to be [inaudible]. But we’re a small unit as you can see and enormous increase one of the I’m told we’re the only bit of the Treasury that is actually increasing in head count.

What do we do, well kind of what it says on the tin. In strictness we have two functions now. And just a subtlety, Ministers can come along and say we’d like you to do such and such and if we agree then we get into a slightly formal process which is we publish terms of reference we come out with the report, Chancellor has to respond. All published. We can though do our own projects, decide on our own, and in that case the Chancellor doesn’t have to respond but I think he probably would. But that’s sort of what the legislation’s laying down. We’ll also be doing an annual report on our activities and the tax system. We pride ourselves on this bit, going out and about gathering evidence, and I draw your attention to the fact that we gather evidence from everybody involved with the tax system, or that’s what we’re trying to do, including very much from [?] HMRC staff. We want to know because frankly HMRC staff know as much as anybody about what makes the tax system difficult to deal with, and we get lots of good evidence from staff colleagues. And we’ll come up with recommendations. And what have we done? Twelve main projects I’ll list them in a moment. To the end of last year we had just over four hundred recommendation some of you may have heard me say that number before, and we got a hit rate of just over 50% accepted with about another quarter under consideration. Reasonable hit rate? Yeah reasonable I think. Some might say well why don’t you get 100% to which |I think the response is if we got 100% we’re probably not being challenging enough. Because obviously what we don’t do is absolutely bottom it out, we make recommendations, if ministers think hey that’s not a bad idea then of course it’s over to you and colleagues Treasury to really take it forward and obviously there’s a few condocs flying around at the moment that are the produce of previous recommendations from us.

What have we done? Well we’ve done a series of projects that was the first ten and I’ll talk about a couple of them very briefly and slightly longer the two topics we’ve just looked at. The old familiar one of combining income tax and NICs or at least bringing them closer together. But just to begin at the top, just to put another little contextual point on, first project we did was of course on tax reliefs. We documented them we did a list and we found 1042. As a result of our recommendations and a bit of work by HMRC colleagues, 43 reliefs got abolished. So first point just checking that everybody’s awake can everybody see the magic in 43 being abolished? [Laughter] Great, you are awake. So the next question is how many reliefs are there now? Given that that was three and a half years ago.

[Inaudible].

Fourteen hundred. A cynic in the front row.

**Tony Wallace**

That’s why I’m the President.

**John Whiting**

Well sadly I’m afraid if you’re basing your pay claims on that amount of growth it’s not that bad. Any others? Last time we counted it was 1156 and it’s we’ve had a few more since then. I mean you know we can joke about it but I mean it is a serious point because obviously the challenge is how on earth do people manage all their way through all that lot, be it HMRC staff be it advisors, be it businesses that have to work out what they claim. And as we’ll come back to I think there’s too many simplistic ideas oh yeah let’s have another relief for that coming into the system.

So those are sort of what we’ve done the headlines, we do of course publish everything and you know anybody who wants to see our work it’s all there on the website. I’m just going to say a brief word about employee benefits and employment status and then slightly longer word about the income tax/NICs project. Employee benefits and expenses of course we all know that if somebody gets a benefit they’re taxable on it and what this project sort of became about, once we got together with quite a few people, is hang on a minute there’s about four and a half million P11Ds filled in every year and processed, there’s about half a million of them report benefits under £100 and you think why are we bothering. So we came up with a range of recommendations, six in all, sort of six key ones, which would probably get rid of virtually all the P11Ds. And things like payrolling the trivial benefits group, lot of these things are coming in as of effectively last week. And a couple of other things, travel and subsistence we’ve proposed a few changes there not much happening, PSA PAYE settlement agreements at last after some pressure we’re getting some reviews of those. So you know all I’m trying to say here is that we try and look at things that would all being well, benefit everybody because clearly this does point the way to a simpler system, I think. It’s quite interesting going along and presenting this to a group of tax software manufacturers some of whom make P11D software. [Laughter] And I thought I was actually being quite brave going there but they thought it was a great idea, so you know ok well if you think it’s a good idea we must have won I think, so be that as it may.

Couple of other things we looked at. Terminations, accommodation benefit and there’s proposals on termination payments in announced in the current budget. Some changes, not quite as we’d recommended, there you go. We can’t govern it, and as much as anything that shows of course at the end of the day it’s up to ministers to decide as advised by officials.

So that’s what’s happening on that front. The other I was just going to have a brief word about was employment status. We had a big project to look at how the system is perhaps not keeping up with changing working patterns and this arguably is one of our themes to try and say well what’s happening in the wider world. How are things changing and you know you’ve probably seen it as well, working patterns changed quite a bit, the proportion of self employed is increasing. The biggest increase is in people who aren’t purely self employed or aren’t single job, in other words they’re multi jobbers or combining employed and self employed and that’s kind of putting extra stress and strain on the system as many will know. Came up with a report a year ago, various things identified none of which would be any surprise to the system, and of course when we look at things we tend to look internationally to see if that can give us any guidelines as to you know a system that we can shamelessly plagiarise because they’ve solved it. There weren’t any, nobody’s really solved it, although we were quite taken with part of the Italian system for defining whether you’re employed or not because I don’t know is there an expert in Italian tax here? Or a volunteer who’d be willing? Because one of the definitions of an employee is if you have a desk with your name on it [laughter]. You’re very good, you got to the avoidance before before I’d even got there. We decided not to recommend that one but it it is faintly interesting. It’s a bit like the Spanish system of taxing restaurants, as you may know, they have an alternative system of taxing restaurants small restaurants based on the numbers of tables, and the charge is number of tables times figure. Anybody worked out ways of abusing that rule? {Laughter] And you if I don’t know if anybody’s been to a tapas bar in Spain and they have these big sort of sherry barrel type things to sort of put your drinks on, yeah? Do you know why they’re so popular? They do not count as a table. [Laughter]. Planning is worldwide. Anyway. Sorry I digress. We take lessons from abroad but not all the lessons.

Various things we did come up with and I think one thing that I think might be quite influential fingers crossed, is an unsurprising conclusion which is that one of the biggest problems in here certainly from a business point of view is the way that so many things are built on the employed/self-employed employment status boundary. Tax, National Minimum Wage, benefits, auto-enrolment, employment rights as a key, they’re built on it but they tend to be pulling against each other and diverging so one of our ideas was a cross government working group to at least coordinate and see if these definitions can move instead. And that was accepted, so it might just happen. Interesting idea.

A variety of other things. Including for example an enhanced employment status indicator tool which I’m very pleased to say HMRC are taking forward. And a point with greater certainty the point being that you know everybody wants some rules around it. HMRC wants some sensible rules around it in terms of what people have to do to be able to depend on it, taxpayers want to know whether they can depend on it, so maybe we can get a better way of working with that.

So that’s the employment status. Pause for a minute I mean I’m going very rapidly, anyone got any queries on what I’ve said so far or a comments or observations? Ok. We will have a few minutes at the end probably for questions.

Income tax/NICs. This is the one we’ve recently reported on. We were asked to look at closer alignment, not merger. Merger no. For reasons everybody knows. Can you bring them together. The subtext of the project is very much to look at something that so many people say well just ought to do it. Just you know it’s all too easy. I went into one meeting with some entrepreneurs in Manchester to talk about it and they virtually refused to talk about this because they said come on it’s just blindingly obvious. Just do it. It’s easy. Well, ministers are kind of fed up with being told its dead easy and why don’t you do it so part of our job is to expose frankly why it’s not easy and to try and flush out and get or at least start to get some sort of public debate so if this is nothing new and of course it’s NICs that tends to be the problem, and what we you know some of the stuff we’ve come up with is you know you come up with interesting things like that. Yes of course you ought to put NICs onto a PAYE-like basis but if you do, seven million pay more six million pay less. That’s kind of interesting isn’t it. And even more interesting is the ones that pay less are broadly lower paid than the ones who pay more. That’s kind of interesting. And those figures in case you’re wondering where we got them from, we got them from HMRC. And KAI in particular from to whom many thanks indeed. And of course the real push is to try and dig in to more of that and really try and work at what it all means because we basically came up with sort of well seven stage plans, seven steps call it what you will for bringing these things closer together and again I’m sure few of them will strike people who work in this area as anything exceptional but could we get NICs onto a cumulative basis as discussed. How about employer’s NICs. How about switching that to just tax the whole payroll, rather than trying to tie it to NICs. Self employed. Should we bring those closer to employed. But also give them similar benefits.

Very interesting of course when you go and do some polling and testing and arguing and surveying as to what people actually think NICs do. And so we did a survey we got six hundred and fifty responses to this survey and ok a lot of them were probably as expected but it’s quite interesting when you find a significant cadre of people who are convinced that NICs pays for the Health Service and a subset of that who believe you have to have a full contributions record to get treatment on the NHS. And this is quite worrying I’d suggest. Because you know the contributory principle, there’s a undoubtedly an argument that says just knock it on the head it’s sort of had its day. There’s equally an enormous argument that says keep it and build on it, but the trouble is very few people seem to understand actually what it is and what you get for it. So hence we think one of the things is just something of a campaign to sort of improve on the standard. Maybe wishful thinking but ministers were quite taken by the idea. Dangerous idea getting people to understand tax.

Bring definitions together because they both apply to earnings, if anybody wants to know what the differences are we think we have the comprehensive list which lists 85 differences between income tax earnings and NIC earnings. If anybody finds any more please let us know.

If you’re going to align why don’t we tax fully to NICs benefits in kind. Yes I know there’s Class 1A on employer’s but why don’t employees pay it. And there’s a very interesting change here. Because we noted this a few years ago, it generally got greeted with a certain amount of hysteria that if you tax benefits in kind to NICs that means lots of low paid employees would have to pay more NICs. Ok. When we around this time [?] and kicked it around the general mood was hang on a minute, it’s unfair that somebody who gets a benefit pays less tax than somebody who gets the same value paid cash. That’s quite an interesting change of mood. So obviously that would raise more money, you know, that can pay for some other things. Harmonised rules and procedures. Well of course you all know, everybody knows don’t we, that you cannot change NICs in a Finance Bill. Yes? Anybody know why?

[Inaudible]

Well if you’re interested, and I don’t suppose any of you really are, but you know just in case you are, there’s a little annex in our report that tries to delve into it and if I’m candid we never really cracked it, It seems to be down to Parliamentary convention and procedures but of course you know changing that might upset the House of Lords. But it’s kind of interesting to go into it, so you know could we at least for example and we think we can, pass a rule you know just a one clause somewhere that says if you change a rule for income tax then it automatically applies to NICs if it’s just a question of definition, so as to stop us sort of bringing in an exemption for trivial benefits from 6 April this year for income tax purposes simplification and then about five six months later for NICs purposes. Wishful thinking? Dunno. Because it seems to have chimed quite a lot and I mean as much as anything as i say what we want to do is to do more work particularly on those two and we’ll be working at that over the summer so if anybody’s got things they want to contribute on it, comment, and as I said we’ll be picking KAI’s brains a great deal to try and get the numbers out. So anybody’s got views please let us know.

We did also in parallel do a shorter piece on small companies we’ve in the past done small unincorporated businesses and that’s led a bit to some of the work at the moment on an the leading into making tax digital et cetera so we’re looking at small companies ditto. And a variety of things coming up and you know a number of acceptances of our recommendations thirteen key ones six accepted one considered one rejected which was a long term study of a consolidated tax system ok I don’t mind I give up on that one, but generally interestingly to look a little further at a coupe fo things that definitely resonate with colleagues we’re talking to in HMRC. The idea of a sort of giving a sole trader a certain amount of limited liability protection without incorporating a company could that work? And also the idea of taxing some small companies on a look-through basis ie taxing the proprietors direct. Which theoretically at least has some attractions. Any comments queries on that or the NICs ?

**Steve Dodd**

John yes Steve Dodd here Ill declare an interest I do this at work in this area

**John Whiting**

Glad somebody does

**Steve Dodd**

Just two things, a question and an observation. Question – what can ARC do to for the in this context because we used to [?] directly on consultation papers now we work more indirectly towards change. But several of those things you’ve mentioned, I know my colleagues have been arguing for for a long time with lots of obstacles maybe your role has cleared the way, so I think maybe there’s a role a dialogue between you and the union to say what can we do, should we go back to commenting directly, should we well are we getting our members influence over in the right way even if we’ve got a different role to you, and that’s the question.

The observation is that you seem to be coming as a tax design authority you know and is that the direction that you think is going to grow, or are we reaching peak OTS anytime soon.

**John Whiting**

Commenting on the latter I mean the tax design authority it’s a fair challenge I mean and I think there it’s in terms of what we’re encouraged to do is think some big issues but also some detailed points and some you know so relatively nitpicky points that we can make progress on quickly, but also at least punt into the open the bigger issues. On the former we really seriously would welcome talking whether it’s through ARC or whether it’s you know direct to you and your team. If I’m allowed to tell a story slightly out of school, on this one we wanted to talk to front line people but we never quite made it there were various blockages and difficulties ok so we very much welcome. Now whether you’ve you know whether we should just simply come through the head of ARC and you know you point us to the right people whether you we don’t tend to put out condocs very often we tend to come round and talk to people.

**Steve Dodd**

We have done that with [inaudible] in the past [inaudible] so it wouldn’t be new territory.

**John Whiting**

Yeah. Welcome.

**Jeremy Burrows**

Jeremy Burrows.

I’m very interested to hear about your list of 85 differences between income tax and NICs, partly I suppose it’s because I’m a lawyer and those sorts of things interest me. Very interested to know if we can get hold of a copy of it and

**John Whiting**

It’s published

**Jeremy Burrows**

Oh right and also a direct question to you: does limitation feature on it or is that the 86th?

**John Whiting**

Limitation’s in there because we have identified that within this part of harmonising roles and procedures the limitation was identified in there and I think we’ve already I think HMRC are already acting on that point. So yes it it’s definitely in there but I mean if you can find the 86th but seriously all the reports are published on our website if you want a hard copy see me later I’ll send you one.

**Graham Black**

John, Graham Black. As you can see you’re dealing with HMRC people and we’ll happily delve into any amount of detail [laughter] on all of these things given half a chance

**John Whiting**

What do you think turns me on?

**Graham Black**

I was wondering, I was trying to approach it on a step by step basis. The difficulty always is on things like reliefs there’s always a loser. Now and there’s always going to be a political pressure and and our political masters are going to think twice about anything that brings in a bit of pain. Is there any argument for saying actually we need something that’s more of a big bang because if you if you look across all of the reliefs and you sweep them all away then yeah everyone loses a bit but overall there would be then money that would actually lower the tax rate for example so that in the law of big numbers actually individuals may gain a bit and lose a bit but where it’s a bit more difficult perhaps on an individual bit is there any any potential political will to do something as radical as that?

**John Whiting**

Well I mean you’ve expressed it almost better than I can because what I would say is this whole thing about income tax and NICs is at least showing that I think ministers have got quite an appetite for at least putting on the table some big issues. The idea of you know scrapping all the reliefs and going back you know flat tax we did broach that but frankly it fairly quickly got knocked on the head because you know it’s an element of we are where we are, yes great idea if we’re starting with a clean sheet of paper. There’s too many vested interests and it is actually quite interesting going round and talking to some industry groups who say yes we need a simpler system and I would necessarily name the organisation I as talking to and I said ok you want a simpler system, what’s in your current budget requests? And they said oh you know this this this and this. And why? Well because that all you know that’ll help. Well this is four extra reliefs. And you know everybody wants their thing and of course if you know one of my personal hobby horses is scrap capital allowances allow depreciation and let’s not worry about Industrial Buildings Allowance or whatever. But if you do that then you immediately run into the hang on a minute we get 100% capital you can’t do that. So I’ve a feeling that there isn’t really the appetite you know for obvious reasons to do enormous big bang stuff because partly because there’s a transition.

**Tony Wallace**

One more I think yes.

**John Whiting**

Find another couple of minutes at the end.

**[Unidentified]**

It’s just a comment really but with that approach it seems to me that the main places where you can make a change where there aren’t any, where the the losers are the people without a voice. And what safeguards do we have there?

**John Whiting**

Yeah. I mean that’s the risk isn’t it that’s the risk of any reform that I mean what we do is for any of our projects we always have a consultative committee who represent what I try and set up as a good cross section so for example on this one we have the Low Incomes Tax Reform Group involved and we always try and you know in saying we talk to people I really get quite obsessive about trying to make sure we really get a good cross section geographically types and all the rest of it, you know that is so important to us. But at the end of the day we make recommendations which we think are balanced it's up to ministers advised by HMRC and of course in most cases there’ll be a consultation which will again allow plenty of chipping in. Eg accommodation we’ve looked at that there’s an obvious way forward on simplifying but when you look at who might be affected on simplifying accommodation benefits even though everyone says yeah that’s an obvious way to go, it would affect quite a lot farm workers for example. So you’ve got to take that into account. And I’d like to think we speak up for them with our recommendations. Sorry I think I got the impression there was one more was there?

**Tony Wallace**

Aye one more one more. If it’s quick Jim.

[Inaudible]

**John Whiting**

It’s the answers that take a long time.

**Jim Rogers**

Thank you. Jim Rogers I’m capital allowances policy advisor so pleased to have [laughter] pleased to hear you’re doing me out of a job and can I ask a

**John Whiting**

There’s plenty of other things

**Jim Rogers**

Can I ask a question of slight devilment. Have any of your recommendations led to a new relief.

**John Whiting**

Yes. There’s one of our recommendation was to abolish the 8,500 higher paid limit which looking round the room some of us are old of us to remember when 8,500 we aspired to to be higher paid. And you may know that had to come in with two safeguards , one of them I think was a very welcome one and put our hands up it was one that we argued for to protect the low paid care worker who got accommodation. So yeah we definitely did that. The one that we didn’t quite spot but we realised it was going to be an issue was the minister of religion who is low paid particularly apparently it’s the Catholic church as we got serious lobbying on, so if you’re a effectively the 8,500 limit still lives for ministers of religion. And of course that what that immediately aroused in various people’s minds is is there therefore scope for setting up the church of the holy tax avoidance [laughter] paying yourself very low levels to get non-taxable benefits but I’m very pleased to say that the draftsmen of the provisions saw that one coming. So I don’t think you’re going to be out of a job.

**Tony Wallace**

John thank you. Do you want to take a couple of minutes?

**John Whiting**

I’ll just if I may

**Tony Wallace**

Of course.

**John Whiting**

Just to round off. Having talked you through, we are often said you know what is it that you know summarise where we’ve got to. I’m under no illusions that the OTS has been an experiment you know is simplification possible is it worth putting some effort in you know the budget the first few years of our existence was well under half a million a year so there’s not too much taxpayer’s money wasted on frivolities like trying to simplify the system. It’s an experiment but being made permanent so I’m hoping that says we’re getting somewhere. But back to the Brighton pier analogy. But I mean you know here’s a few successes you know things like keeping things important things on the agenda. But problems failures various issues there. Some ideas lost on political grounds isn’t that just inevitable. Some make limited headway and I’m bound to say that sometimes what we find is that despite all our efforts HMRC colleagues if I’m candid don’t trust our findings. You know, I wonder if we can get over that in our new incarnation. And picking up something somebody said you know various people have challenged us we haven’t abolished a tax yet. But if we can have a quick poll afterwards as to which one we should abolish then we’ll go for it.

And some lessons learned. How do we do it well we’ve got to work with ministers of course and that’s why back to it you know we are independent but we try and work with ministers try and work with the grain because there’s no point in us putting forward things that just are going nowhere. Work at relationships with officials. Seriously we pride ourselves we have a good relationship with Treasury and HMRC, and I’d be delighted to build on it. We maintain independence, challenge, manage expectations, and keep positive, there’s one lesson I’d leave you with, simplification is not simple. [laughter]

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks John.

[Applause]

Just before he does go, just to let you know that John I think you had some ministerial commitments this morning didn’t you, I think you, was it the minister you were seeing this morning?

**John Whiting**

Yes

**Tony Wallace**

So he had to hot foot it here to get find the time to talk to us and I think we all do appreciate

**John Whiting**

It was fine it was time it was just that

**Tony Wallace**

Big it up. Say it was difficult. [Laughter]

**John Whiting**

No it’s just I’m going to pay tribute to Iain Campbell who went even greyer waiting for me

**Tony Wallace**

Go on you do it because it suits me Iain Campbell’s an absolute star with us and if you looking for somebody to work with among ARC to get some information in to feed through to John, Iain is your man to do it he works tirelessly on this stuff so thank you very much to you both. Thank you.

[Applause]

**Tony Wallace**

Ok I’m going to change the agenda ever so slightly, I was going to call Mr Penman the General Secretary of the FDA, I’m going to take the next block of motions first and then bring Dave in on the back of that if AGM are content to do so.

# Building Our Future (Career Paths)

**Tony Wallace**

So we have four motions on Building Our Future career paths in the name of Glasgow and North East North East and West Midlands. Can I take motion 28 from Glasgow please. Thanks John that’s brilliant.

*Motion 28*

*28. (+) That this AGM welcomes the continued investment in trainees by HMRC. However we are concerned that the continually increasing focus on specialisms is inconsistent with Building our Future and will produce tax professionals with a regime rather than a customer focus. If the department is serious about building full careers within individual regional centres with professions properly represented it must ensure its trainees are not so narrowly developed that they cannot easily adapt as the requirements of tax legislation and practice change.*

*This AGM instructs Committee to seek to work with HMRC to ensure that each regional centre is designed to provide the full and varied careers promised in Building our Future with career paths and professions properly embedded and represented in each and that training of tax professionals is consistent with those aims.*

*Glasgow Centre*

**Padrig Davies**

Who? I’m Padrig Davies I’m a TSP14 trainee from Glasgow and this is my first conference [cheering]. So this motion is mostly about the interplay between the Building Our Future sort of Regional Centres and the training courses that we have at the moment. So particularly the sort of TSP course that I’m on but I think it probably applies for other courses as well. So one of the things we’ve been told about Building Our Future is that in the Regional Centres we should be able to have full and varied careers all in one location with promotion opportunities and chances to change jobs and do lots of interesting things, and one of the things that we’re worried about is that training courses might be drawn too narrowly so particularly with streaming that we’ve heard a little bit about before, sort of an example would be if somebody has spends two years doing general training then streams into VAT then they might find it their opportunities restricted if they’re not able to change into CT work or Employment duty work and the same is true in the opposite direction as well. So we’re sort of concerned that there is a risk of sort of pigeonholing people at quite early stage in their career often with very little choice on their end, and we need to have a sort of flexibility and variability of training courses that mean that those sort of full and varied careers all in one place aren’t don’t turn out to be just be a myth. So that’s why I urge you to support this motion.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you. Mover for motion 29 in the name of the North East.

*Motion 29*

*29. (+) That this AGM welcomes HMRC's commitment, as part of Building Our Future, to developing varied career paths through to senior civil service level, within Regional Centres.*

*However, this AGM is concerned that this commitment is undermined by recent announcements about the future of the 100 Parliament Street office, where HMRC envisages over 900 staff will continue to work even after Regional Centres are fully established. Although these roles are meant to be only those which require close geographical proximity to Treasury and Ministers, this AGM is concerned that in practice senior leadership roles will continue to be located in London, depriving Regional Centres of credible career paths.*

*This AGM calls on ARC Committee to press HMRC to provide justification for those roles remaining within 100PS, challenging any assumption that such roles need to be carried out from a London office in every case.*

*North East Centre*

**Graham Turnbull**

Graham Turnbull from North East Centre. Motion 29. What this is basically about is that HMRC is saying that it’s committed to career paths so they’re going to take us all the way through to Senior Civil Service SCS level and also that this is going to happen within the Regional Centres that are coming at the moment. However it’s been fairly recently confirmed that 100 Parliament Street we’re going to have 900 people that are going to continue to work there and these are supposed to be quite tied to Treasury ministers on a geographical basis. We think that’s going to be around about two thirds of those will actually be still Senior Civil Service to remain in London. So we’re getting this commitment that we will see career progression through the Regional Centres but this isn’t really backed up by the figures or the general feeling that we’re getting. So what we want is for ARC to basically get justification from HMRC about their approach to this, about some justification about whether or not these pathways for career paths actually exist all the way through to Senior Civil Service level. That is what we’d like you to support on this motion please.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you. Mover please for motion 30 from the North East.

*Motion 30*

*30. (+) That this AGM notes that HMRC has now published details of its plans for Regional Centres. These plans include an overview of the proposed locations together with some details of plans to transition to the new structure.*

*However, AGM is disappointed that there is little clarity on the plans of individual lines of business, and as such it is unclear what roles, grades, and numbers of staff, will be available in a given Regional Centre in the future. This uncertainty and lack of strategic vision makes it difficult for members to have informed decisions about their future careers.*

*This AGM instructs Committee to continue to press HMRC for further details of the proposed Regional Centres, and to ask the Department to produce plans for its lines of business.*

*North East Centre*

**David Cooper**

David Cooper speaking this time as a North East delegate asking you to support motion 30, and I’m going to throw some numbers back at you again so I hope you’re paying attention. The recent BOF3 announcements Regional Centres are going to be set up in Benton Park View, no surprise there, and it will have something like 6 to 6,300 people in it full time equivalent. Bit of a surprise there, Benton Park View currently has 5,967 full time equivalents and that was described recently as full to capacity, so we’re not quite sure where they’re going to find room for those extra 300 if indeed they are. But the 6,300 also is problematic in the sense that we have of course other offices in the North East, I’m in Middlesbrough, in case people didn’t know, I’m not from Middlesbrough don’t make that mistake [laughter], there’s 300 in Russel Street there’s 400 in George Stephenson House there is 2,000 in Washington, I’ve already covered that not a lot of these are within RDT, but the total numbers in the North East at the moment is round about 9,870. We’re inspectors, surprise surprise one of our inspectors noticed this discrepancy, 9,800 going down to 6,300, was asked the question how is that going to happen and the announcer surprise surprise had not idea, we challenged it we’ve asked the questions repeatedly we’ve been told that it will happen, still not sure how, we’ve also had I’ve approached lines of business I work within ISBC as it is now, I’ve asked them how they plan to sort of resolve the issues a particular problem with SME because SME is spread across a large number of locations so how are they going to resolve the issue, well they don’t know. So we’re looking at here a situation where we know that there’s going to be a significant reduction but we don’t know how and clearly that affects our members. If we take Norwich as an example we’ll all be be end up getting exit packages but they won’t be quite as generous as the ones that Norwich managed to achieve thanks to Tony Wallace’s wonderful work. So I ask you to support this motion and ask you to support us in seeking to continue to press HMRC for further details. Thank you.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks David. Motion 31 in the name of the West Midlands please.

Motion 31

*31. (+) That this AGM notes following the announcements in November 2015 about the Regional Centre locations, work is underway to establish the mix of work areas in each Centre.*

*This AGM instructs Committee to press on ExCom the importance of ensuring that each Regional Centre has plenty of roles at Grade 6 and SCS. Further, this AGM asks Committee to push for a good mix in each Centre of roles at these grades, to include technical & policy work in addition to compliance, management, and operations covering different tax regimes & HMRC professions, in order to provide a rich variety of opportunities for career development into these grades within any Regional Centre location.*

*West Midlands Centre*

**Fran Hawkes**

Hello I’m Fran Hawkes from West Midlands, I’d like to echo the points that have already been made. What our motion is about is really just about career progression for everyone in all the Regional Centres. At the moment you can get lots of great policy specialist jobs in London and not that many in Birmingham. I noticed Helen said earlier that she would like to see ExCom move out to Stratford with the rest of them. I don’t want to see ExCom in Stratford I want to see them in Birmingham and Nottingham and Glasgow or wherever. So I’d just ask you to support the motion that there will be genuine SCS grade 6 career paths for everyone in all Regional Centres. Thank you.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you. I’ll move the four motions up to common debate now if anyone has any contributions from the floor. Eugene.

**Eugene Mitchell**

Eugene Mitchell on behalf of Committee speaking in support of motion 29 in particular but all in fact all of the Building Our Future career path motions in general. We’re very happy on Committee to press for justification for roles remaining in London. We know what’s happened in the past in respect of proposed moves of posts from London. And therefore while we’re very very glad to see the commitment to build career paths up to SCS within Regional Centres we’ll actually be even more glad when we start to see it happen. So we will be pushing to have as the default position that any new or replacement posts are placed out of London and that relevant vacancy information sheets clearly explain why any exception is actually an exception. And we’ll be pressing for a panel to be established to agree that the criteria of the exception have been met. I’ve got an awful lot of personal interest in this motion and in Glasgow’s motion 28 and West Midlands motion 31. Being based in Glasgow and from Glasgow I think about the motto of Glasgow which is to let Glasgow flourish. And I want that to happen within HMRC as well by ensuring that we have full and varied careers there. And as a senior leader within HMRC my personal credibility is on the line for as long as we talk about developing career paths up to SCS within Regional Centres without actually delivering on our fine words so please please support this motion.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Eugene. Steve?

**Steve Dodd**

Thanks Tony. Steve Dodd Leeds Centre again. I should say I support all this motions it seems to be my fate to follow Eugene this afternoon on all of these things. I think that the narrowness that these motions describe is not just within the tax profession but is across professions as well, if we’re serious about building those career paths that people are aspire to then we not only have to address the problems that have been set out within the tax profession but look at the movement between. We’ve got a long history of under previous training and departmental structure of people moving from outwith the tax profession not just to policy but to others. I think that if we push the line that the union is setting out here we can make that an exemplar amongst the other professions that make up the department and say tax is the most important profession we are a tax authority, and this is the approach we adopt and we’re not going to have walls built between tax and policy. Between tax and and the other professions. So I think that that it’s a little bit lacking from the motions but let’s not bother trying to address so I think that we should take a wide view of that, build out from these ideas, and say what the department needs is that flexibility. Otherwise the aims for those Regional Centres will be will not be achieved.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Steve. Jeremy?

**Jeremy Burrows**

Jeremy Burrows Legal & Governance. In support particularly of motion 29. Don’t we all just love a them and us situation. We’re all in this together, but some of us are in more of it than others. 900 staff required to stay at 100 Parliament Street because they must be near ministers. I don’t believe a word of it. We in Legal & Governance thought we were safe we’ll be a specialist office, we’ve got to be close to the courts haven’t we. Oh no say they, out you go to Stratford. If we’re lucky we’ll get a touchdown location close to the courts for those days when we need to be in court. Hang on a minute, can’t the same be said for those who need to be close to ministers? Do they need to be in Parliament Street full time? Or wouldn’t just a touchdown location where they can be those days when they have to be close to ministers do? Can’t they show a bit of leadership? Can’t they show that we are all in this together and it’s one department? Maybe that would get a bit of engagement. Come to Stratford, I’m sure it’s lovely there.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Jeremy. Gareth? [inaudible]

 **Gareth Hills**

I’m not sitting on that seat again. Gareth Hills Bristol Centre. Just want to say that I think picking up on what Steve Dodd said very right I think that we look for a wider picture, but I want to make a plea for you know there are little enclaves I think, if you look at digital work we’ve got an enclave of SCS posts up in up in the North East, and those parts of the country that are lucky enough to have large business offices you have little enclaves of SCS there, but then we have the loser enclaves. The whole of Wales one SCS post. I don’t work in Wales by the way I work in Bristol. One SCS post in wales. Northern Ireland one SCS post. Hopefully Graham Black is shortly to make that two. It’s not good enough is it. It’s not good enough for our people in those devolved administrations, it’s not good enough for what we’ve been told about Building Our Future and what it means from a career from AA right up to SCS. Let’s equal out those enclaves, HMRC, listen to what this AGM is saying to you today.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Gareth. [Applause] Any other speakers to the motions? Ok I’ll take motion 28 from Glasgow those in favour please show please.

Thank you and any against.

That’s clearly carried.

*Motion 28: Carried*

Motion 29 in the name of the North East those in favour please?

And those against?

Again clearly carried.

*Motion 29: Carried*

Motion 30 in the name of the North East those in favour?

And against?

Clearly carried.

*Motion 30: Carried*

And motion 31 West Midlands those in favour?

And against?

No that’s clearly carried.

*Motion 31: Carried*

# Dave Penman, General Secretary, FDA

I am now going to call upon Dave Penman. I’m not going to say much about Dave actually because I’m a bit worried about what he might say about me, but one thing I will say is that he and I grew up in the same town as everybody knows in the west of Scotland and we remain utterly amazed every time we walk across that bridge to the Houses of Parliament that we’re still getting away with it. But we seem to be doing it [laughter]. Dave Penman.

[Applause]

**Dave Penman**

Yes thanks very much Tony, I’ll come to that later in my speech. President, Conference, once again it’s my enormous pleasure to be here to be asked back to address the ARC AGM , and when Tony told me that conference was moving venue I did wonder what the motivation was so I began to think about where it was moving to and I pondered the significance of Nottingham, why why is it moving to Nottingham. So I did a bit of research in those precious few moments that you get as General Secretary when there’s nothing really needs your complete attention and you’re mind is free to wander, or Executive Committee meetings as some people call them [laughter]. So there I was last week at the Executive Committee meeting trying to work out the significance of Nottingham. Well there’s an obvious connection I thought, Robin Hood. Wealth distribution. Now I know that you’re a mobile lot, conference, and that Gareth often used to remind us that you have a purpose, but I’m not sure that you could be accused of wealth distribution. Of course unless the poor proportionately paying more tax than the rich counts as wealth distribution. So it’s not that I thought. And like Tony I’m not particularly well educated [laughter] so I struggled

**Tony Wallace**

[Inaudible]

**Dave Penman**

So I struggled with Robin Hood literary references. So I thought what about the Sheriff of Nottingham. Maybe Tony’s got a wee bit demob happy now he’s leaving, and long conversations about growing up in Cumbernauld have taken him back to his Socialist Worker Party days. And that actually this was a sophisticated and poignant allegory for these turbulent political times. After all, the Sheriff of Nottingham was an upper class hypocrite who famously hid his wealth from the crown and cut public spending so dramatically that even Christmas was cancelled. But no. apparently it wasn’t that. Is it the strong links to political tax figures, Ken Clark and Ed Balls are from up Nottingham after all. No, it wasn’t that. Was it more base instincts, Nell Gwynne, D H Lawrence, even Su Pollard are from Nottingham [laughter], was it that? No, said Tony. Though he did look a little bit sheepish so I think I struck a chord with the Su Pollard bit. It’s where I live, he said. So that’s why we’re here, conference. It’s where Tony lives. Well all I can say is be thankful that the boy from Cumbernauld has moved house [laughter].

And on that basis I look forward to addressing you from Solihull next year isn’t that right Vicky?

**Vicky Johnson**

Could be.

**Dave Penman**

But all joking aside I want to pay tribute to your outgoing president and give a warm welcome to your new one. As everyone is tired of hearing, tony and I worked together thirty years ago in Cumbernauld and neither can quite quite believe at times that we’re here together and I have to say it does feel like something has gone very wrong that this is what’s happened. But he has been a tireless of advocate on your behalf with the department, politicians, ministers and in the media. The commitment required to be president of ARC often goes unseen and takes a toll not only on the president but also their family. Particularly if they live out of London and Kate and Peter deserve all our gratitude. I imagine Peter’s question of who’s that strange man at the dining room Mummy? Right will need an answer.

But it’s not all give. Tony’s time in one of the world’s great capitals resulted in a cultural awakening. He may not be brave about it, he may not be brave enough to talk about it amongst his friends back in Cumbernauld, but he has been exploring all that the bright lights of the West End have to offer. Guided patiently by Roland Zollner, until recently FDA’s equality officer and erstwhile Professor Henry Higgins to Tony’s Eliza Dolittle, Tony has been dining in the finest restaurants followed by a bit of Cosi Fan Tutte. I haven’t heard the accent change [laughter] but I did notice that his little pinkie sticks out when he sips a glass of chardonnay if you look for it tonight you’ll see it.

Tony you’ve been a valued member of the FDA team at Leake Street and you’ll be greatly missed. But fear not. Solihull’s loss is Leake Street’s gain. Vicky you’ve always been prepared to stand up for what you believe in and I’m afraid to challenge the status quo. Even when you’re wrong [laughter]. Two critical qualities required of the ARC President and I know you’re looking forward to the challenge and we look forward to supporting you and welcoming you to HQ.

Well conference, we live as the old saying goes, in interesting times. Certainly for tax professionals. The ramifications of the Panama papers in particular the events of the last seven days, are likely to have a profound effect on the politics of this country and on the future of your department. If the opposition play their cards right and unfortunately there’s no guarantee that they will, in a matter of days publishing your tax affairs could become a requirement of front bench politics. With all the subsequent questions that will move forward as we have seen. And whilst the furore just now has been driven in part by the politics of the EU referendum and in particular newspapers in the no camp using it to attack the Prime Minister, it has I believe tapped into a broader sentiment. In part this is fuelled by the all in this together approach adopted by the chancellor and the govern and the last government to justify slashing public spending. But also their transparency agenda. If senior civil servants salaries to be published, if suddenly it’s the best disinfectant as the Prime Minister famously said, it’s difficult to deny that those who have a major say in the UK’s approach to taxation should be transparent about their own tax affairs.

You can rightly be proud in ARC of your campaigning work on defeat the deficit and the creation of the public understanding group. ARC have been unafraid to confront politicians who unfairly criticise the work of members and at the same time have built a broader consensus amongst all stakeholders to support the call for greater investment. And that work bore fruit at the spending review and the task force announced at the weekend to be led by HMRC. Once again demonstrating the value to the UK of investing in tax professionals. That spending review also heralded a further reduction of 21 percent in baseline resources for the department over the next four years, leading to thousands of further job cuts and as you know dramatic reorganisation of the department. All of this of course on top of around twenty five cut resources in the last parliament. John Kenneth Galbraith, an economics advisor to a number of American presidents, once firmly said that the only function of economic forecasting is to make astrology look respectable [laughter]. And as if to prove him right, just four months after the spending review the chancellor was back for more. Storm clouds are brewing he said at the budget, and with that a further 3.5 billion pounds was cut from departmental budgets and 2019-20 sorry 2019-20 as he chases his mythical surplus. Atop of that two billion pounds is to come from changes to the discount rate in 2019 which really just means that the Treasury are going to charge departments more for the cost of your pension. Then of course this month employers’ national insurance goes up by over 3% which again simply means that department’s budgets are cut further. So whilst an elected government has a mandate to determine the resources allocated to the Civil Service, it also has an obligation to match those resources with the commitments that it makes. That’s what the government said it would do with their single departmental plans. Yet what we got was part mission statement, part unspecific list of objectives. And don’t just take my word for it, political rhetoric is no basis for resource management, said David Walker in the Guardian when they were published. And then rather surprising language, Julian McCrae, deputy director at the institute for government, described them as little more than waffle. And on the back of that little gem I’ve invited Julian to be one of the speakers at our annual conference in May and I’m looking forward to hopefully some more unparliamentary language on the government’s record.

So if the government won’t set out clearly how it will manage its priorities at the beginning of a parliament it certainly isn’t going to when it moves the goalposts. More than achievable, is how the Chancellor described the additional 3.5 billion pounds of savings to be delivered, without of course explaining how they are to be achieved. The new government was also not slow off the blocks in announcing what increasingly feels like an ideological attack on public servants. There was some hope that a new approach to pay would have emerged but once again the Chancellor allowed the continuation of the 1% pay policy. Real pay levels will have fallen by around a third by the end of the decade and at the same time we’re seeing a growing number of inequities anomalies and exemptions. From crown commercial services to MOD procurement the failure of Civil Service salaries to compete with outside competitors is clear to see. There’s no strategic goal in using the Civil Service’s pay budget of twelve billion pounds to better use, it is simply a mechanism to make further savings. Pay restraint is considered a success story in the Treasury, billions saved without consequence. Because it’s not about fairness or any consideration of the impact of public servants and until civil servants vote with their feet the Treasury will be unmoved.

Then there’s the fresh attack on redundancy terms. Despite Francis Maude calling the agreement with FDA fair to the taxpayer and fair to civil servants, this government are not only coming for the multipliers that determine the size of your redundancy package, but also trying to change the process. What that means is that if you do not volunteer at an early stage, crucially a stage when you don’t even know you’re at risk of redundancy, then you lose the right to the maximum payout.

And of course the 95k cap on redundancy payments in the public sector. A better example of dog whistle politics draped up dressed up as an attack on fat cats you’ll struggle to find. Why 95k? Well it’s less than 100k. It’s five figures rather than six. Dreamed up in the lead-up to the last election by Joe Johnson, Boris’s brother, as a bit of good politics. And for some bizarre reason in the Enterprise Bill. It will deny thousands of public servants the same terms of redundancy as their low paid colleague. And then we’ve got the trade union bill. Unnecessary, unjust, undemocratic, and crucially will deal a hammer blow to good industrial relations. At a time when days lots to strike are a record low it’s a phoney war that doesn’t exist like something out of 1984. A pantomime anyway necessary to keep everyone in check. I’ve been at the FDA for sixteen years now, man and boy I like to think, and it’s hard to imagine a more difficult time for public services or for the union itself. But it’s at times like this that we define who we are as a union and how we respond. We’re just completing our survey on working hours and the figures are astonishing. 59% of those who responded work at least an additional six hours unpaid every week. A quarter work more than an additional eleven hours and 10% say they work an extra 15 hours or more. Remember this is every week. One in ten are effectively working a seven day week but not getting paid for it. Over 70% of the respondents said their employers didn’t even keep a record of the hours they work. Over half were unable to take their annual leave, two thirds of whom said this was because of workload pressures, a figure that has doubled in just four years. So if the government won’t match the commitments they make to the resources they provide, then we need to end a culture of civil servants filling the gap with unpaid overtime. And that’s why in every FDA bargaining area this year we will be including a claim that members should be compensated for every hour worked. On pay our evidence to the Senior Salaries Review Body called on them to address the long term decline in comparable pay. In the year where MP’s independent review highlight the very same issue we have challenged SSRB to be similarly bold. Highlighting an increasing number of exemptions and anomalies being created by a system that fails to deliver value for money or fairness.

You have led the way in challenging the consequences of pay restraint through the equal pay cases you’re taking through the courts. And I want to pay tribute to ARC Committee and their officers for the methodical approach that’s being adopted, a requirement if we’re to make any kind of process in what is a notoriously difficult legal area. And it’s always difficult to single out on individual, but as you already know, Helen Baird Parker’s contribution and seemingly endless enthusiasm in driving these cases forwards have been immense. But mostly I want to pay tribute to the brave members who’ve been prepared to challenge their employer in the courts knowing that this could take many years without any guarantee of success, never comfortable or easy but I would argue less comfortable when you’re a senior manager of a professional in the organisation.

FDA is leading the way in challenging the 95k cap on redundancy, from briefing parliamentarians to brigading sometimes reluctant unions to raise the issue we continue to challenge the passage of the bill and have supplied numerous amendments to Her Majesty’s opposition. On changes to the redundancy provision we’re encouraging members to participate in the consultation which is ongoing and I urge everyone in this room to take part in it and we’ve started the negotiating process are at the forefront of challenging the assumptions that underpin the changes being made. And as we have seen many times, getting your hands dirty and being prepared to engage in real meaningful negotiations delving into the details, is the only way we’ll make progress. On the trade union bill we’ve produced briefings for the lords on the huge administrative impact it’s going to have on smaller unions, and the briefings have been quoted in numerous debates. And all of this of course places a huge challenge on the FDA itself. Across the union membership is down 15% over the last four years as tens of thousands of civil servants leave the service. Our resources are being cut yet the demands being placed on us are increasing. Sound familiar? The department of the Crown Prosecution Service, a big membership area for the FDA, membership and staffing numbers have reduced by about a third over this period of time and I know absolute numbers in HMRC have not dropped by anything like that figure, ARC still only represents about 50% of potential members. We know that recruiting new members is a challenge and we’re trying to offer more value for membership. FDA Portfolio was launched two years ago offering a range of consumer and financial benefits. FDA Learn continues to be hugely popular with members and now counts about 10% of the work that we do. But over the last twelve months the union has taken two historic decisions to help secure our future/. Firstly in February purchased a property which once refurbished will become the new headquarters of the union. This will help provide financial stability over the longer term by eventually eliminating our accommodation costs when the mortgage is paid, which currently accounts for about 8% of our income, and will also provide an accruing asset. But critically we hope it will also allow us to enhance our offer to members with better training and meeting facilities.

And then secondly in July we launched Keystone, our membership offer for SEP and HEO grades and their equivalents. It was not a decision taken lightly and many of you were involved in that debate. Since our founding in 1919 we have only represented the most senior grades. The first division, as it was known then, that gave us part of our name. We know that there is an appetite for a strong pragmatic and honest union, a union that stands up for managers and professionals. Keystone is an opportunity to grow the FDA not only in numbers but also in influence. But it is only an opportunity that can be realised if you our activists support it. We cannot reach our potential membership unless you all play a role in this. How does the HO or SO not a member of any union know that Keystone even exists. That is why we need all the reps to become advocates for Keystone. There are four times the number of potential members in Keystone grades than FDA traditional grades and departments like HMRC are critical to its success and also its fastest growing area. We now have three Keystone members on our executive committee, just elected over the last few weeks, and two of them, Linda Priestley and Jake Wild, are from HMRC.

So as a union we continue to work hard to protect and promote your interests. And as I said earlier it’s difficult to imagine a more difficult time to be doing that. In those difficult times however, we must continue to be pragmatic with employers and government, and be honest with members about what we can and cannot achieve. That’s what makes us strong. What gives us influence. When others have given up and prefer to stand on the sidelines making noise, it keeps us at the table arguing, challenging, and engaging. Unafraid to challenge but also unafraid to reach agreement. So whether you’re ARC, the Diplomatic Services Association, the Procurators Fiscal Society, Northern Ireland Senior Officers, Managers In Partnership, and now of course Keystone, we are all FDA. Strong, pragmatic, and honest. Thank you.

[Applause]

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Dave. We are running slightly behind time. I could probably take one or two questions if they can be fairly brief and then we’re back onto the agenda. No? Well Dave will be around in the bar later on

**Dave Penman**

Guaranteed.

**Tony Wallace**

and I’m sure that he’ll continue the debate as he always will. Thank you.

# Building Our Future (Retention)

**Tony Wallace**

I’ll bring us back onto the agenda then so we have a block of motions 32 through to 35 on Building Our Future retention from Liverpool Glasgow Committee and from Cambridge respectively. Could I ask people please to be mindful of the time, we do want to try to get through the business this afternoon. Mover for motion 32 from Liverpool please.

*Motion 32*

*32. (\*) That this AGM instructs Committee to seek commitment from HMRC to pay HMA, where requested, and in line with current guidance, in order to retain G6 and G7 resource.*

*Liverpool Centre*

**Dan Staveley**

Hi all. I’m Dan Staveley I’m a TSP15 trainee in Liverpool and this is my first conference [cheering]. The crux of this motion is that it’s a kind of a reminder that there exists already a detailed policy that addresses the provision of home moves assistance. HMRC probably haven’t had as much cause to read or use this policy recently as they perhaps used to but the moves to the Regional Centres that are coming up are about to uproot and relocate quite a lot of people many of whom will be grade 6 and grade 7 resources who are valuable to the department. We just want HMRC to blow the dust off the policy and to commit to giving it properly considered application in situations where providing the home moves assistance could keep these people these resources in the department. Just because they’re moving a lot of people doesn’t mean that there should be any preconceived reluctance to follow their own policy basically. So that’s why we want you to support the motion. [Applause]

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Dan. Mover from Glasgow please.

*Motion 33*

*33. (\*) That this AGM recognises the move to Regional Centres will inevitably result in a significant loss in expertise to HMRC. There will be ARC members who would be able to move to a Regional Centre if Home Move Assistance was made available, even if this involves them in uprooting their families. Taking this approach would enable HMRC to retain at least some of the experienced staff it might lose, and it makes complete sense from a public expenditure viewpoint: spend a small amount of money to retain a staff member who will bring in large sums to the Exchequer, or spend a larger amount in redundancy payment and lose that yield.*

*This AGM instructs Committee to work with HMRC to retain trained professionals in this way - and if HMRC does not agree, then Committee is urged to publicise the waste of public money, and the loss to the Exchequer which will be involved.*

*Glasgow Centre*

**Graham Black**

Thank you Graham Black Glasgow Centre again, despite what Gareth said earlier I’m not about to move to Belfast but the LB are having an extra SCS post in Belfast. I agree entirely with motion 32. I feel a bit angry about this because actually the answer to this issue is simple and straightforward and very obvious and we shouldn’t really be having to fight this case at all. The additional point in motion 33 is having we want the home move assistance but what do we do about it. It’s difficult, we’re not going to go on strike on the matter I dare say, but the fact is that we could imagine in the future some public questioning of ExCom around the decision-making they’ve got here. And we could imagine ExCom being asked well what are the costs involved in doing the following the line you’re following. Well you’re going to reduce morale around the country, you’re going to incur a vast amount of redundancy cost, you’re going to lose a huge amount of expertise, you’re going to lose a huge amount of yield from the opportunity costs from losing all that expertise. You’re going to incur a lot of recruitment costs. You’re going to incur a lot of costs of training. Those are all costs, well what are the benefits. Well the only one you can think of is that instead of spending thirty thousand pounds on home moves at cost, you’re going to spend two million pounds and why? Because the money comes out of a different pot well that sounds like a pretty good use of public money doesn’t it and you can imagine in the face of that public questioning people would feel that they were a little bit vulnerable to some questioning in the public arena around that. I hope, I really fervently hope, that HMRC decide that they’re going to give home move assistance to make sure that we actually retain the expertise and conduct deliver the job we need to. If they don’t, I think I would like ARC Committee to say to them, if you don’t do that you will be in full public glare and you will look strategic or you will look stupid. Make the right choice. Please support the motion.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Graham. Motion 34 in the name of Committee

Motion 34

*34. (\*) That this AGM recognises that HMRC is consolidating its estate on an unprecedented scale with the result that leaders and professionals find themselves in the wrong place at the wrong time and in a position where their invaluable skills may be lost from the organisation.*

*ARC is alarmed and angered that the only options open to staff outside of reasonable daily travel are a lengthy journey at considerable personal cost financially and in terms of work life balance, or exiting the organisation. Meanwhile the policy of tax efficient Home Moves Assistance is downplayed or ignored. HMRC has chosen to shift the cost of restructuring from employer to employee whilst in the worst cases placing the health of members at considerable risk.*

*AGM instruct ARC Committee to press HMRC to use all of the tools it has available to allow skilled professionals to remain in employment and to set up centralised funding arrangements for restructuring which lie outside of the budgets of individual business streams. Such an arrangement allows for the flexibility to meet business need and greater consistency of treatment for staff whilst freeing individual LoB’s from the financial pressure of change.*

*Committee*

**Graham Flew**

Graham Flew moving motion 34 for Committee. We’ve had a number of iterations of Building Our Future and and we’ve learned not to call it BOF because that’s amusing apparently. Anyway BOF is here to stay. We need to make the most of it I guess, we’ve got an ARC has a long history of getting the best for its members by negotiation and consultation. The current difficulty is that we can’t lay down in front of this juggernaut it’s going to roll over us isn’t it. But an enormous number of our members are being and are being badly affected by the proposals to come. It’s difficult to see a clear message from HMRC. On the one hand it professes to value our skills. Well they pay me enough for them, they ought to. I nearly included one of Mr Cooper’s words there, excuse me. On the other hand we’re not hearing a lot of sensible solutions to the myriad of problems which the reorganisation is bringing to many of us. Now I live and work in Peterborough and we were offered a Regional Centre, Stratford. Which one, they asked when they had the announcements [laughter]. Stratford Shakespeare country sounds like a good place to move said another. Oh we’ve we’ve heard that you know the well-rehearsed benefits of these changes, I mean as a Chelsea supporter I got to go to arsenal’s ground. Really good, thank you very much. But what about the people, our members, fellow professionals who’ve got lives and careers around what is here now. Ok maybe with a blank piece of paper you‘d build HMRC into fourteen places. Maybe you wouldn’t. But we are where we are. Our members have made decisions about what where they are what are they going to do next, it’s hardly their fault they’re in the wrong place at the wrong time. So we’re alarmed and angered. Yes angered, it says angered in the Committee motion you notice this? Angered. The supposed solutions are very narrow and dare I say, very poorly thought out. The lines of business are jockeying for position. What do they want, a seat by the window? Can they talk to each other? They’re completely hamstrung by a sensible funding system. Expecting us to travel ridiculous distances and do a proper job, like the one we’ve been trained for, is a massive mistake. Members are not being given realistic options. What happened to flexible working patterns? Where are the imitive use of the new tools? I don’t include touchdown points and six desks for ten of us in that by the way. So what are we asking for. Simple. Use the tools we already have, centralise funding this stops the jockeying for position between budget holders to get the best for their particular line of business. Flexibility. It cannot be beyond the wit of the expertise the intellect that’[s being applied to this to find something better than what’s being offered. Consistency. Fairness. All in all some common sense please. Support the motion.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Graham. Motion 35 in the name of Cambridge please?

Motion 35

*35. (\*) That this AGM notes the continued roll out of the BOF programme and the proposal for Regional Centres.*

*This AGM notes the concerns of members in many parts of the country where there will be no accessible Centre (& hence place to work).*

*This AGM is particularly concerned that many Regions of the UK simply will not have a Regional Centre at all and cites as examples:*

* *East Anglia*
* *The South West of England*
* *The North of Scotland*

*This AGM instructs Committee to engage with HMRC to discuss how these (& other) omissions can be addressed so as to create meaningful jobs for those unable to access the current proposed sites.*

*Cambridge Centre*

**Graham Flew**

Having heard the benefit of the previous speaker [laughter] Graham Flew Cambridge Centre. I’ve been to lots of AGMs and there are there’s usually a motion from Wales, Scotland, the North East, the North West, please can we have some proper jobs where we are. Well what has BOF oops sorry what has Building Our Future done. It’s turned it on its head. It’s compressing that any jobs of any sort into a very small number of places. It says here I had some great things to say but having listened to the previous chap I’ll shut up. I move that motion and support all four please Thank you.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Graham. I’ll open the four motions 32 through to 35 up to common debate. No. I’ll move straight to the vote then please, Thank you. Motion 32 in the name of Liverpool, all those in favour please

Thank you and any against?

No that’s clearly carried.

*Motion 32: Carried*

33 in the name of Glasgow all those in favour

Thank you any against?

Clearly carried.

*Motion 33: Carried*

34 in the name of Committee all those in favour?

Thank you. Against?

No clearly carried.

*Motion 34: Carried*

And motion 35 from that chap from Cambridge all those in favour?

And any against?

No. Thank you very much.

*Motion 35: Carried*

# Flexible Working

Thank you colleagues we’ll move on to the section on flexible working we have motions 36 and 37 which will be taken in common debate, 36 to be moved by Committee please.

*Motion 36*

*36. (+) That this AGM believes that if HMRC refuses to recognise the inherent economic value of its senior professionals and the essential role they play in its business then it is jeopardising results.*

*HMRC must deliver up £5bn in additional tax over the life of this Government and for every £1 spent on ARC members HMRC gets £25 back. However the age profile of ARC grades is rising and it will take time for HMRC’s new trainees to become fully effective. HMRC is finding it increasingly difficult to fill the current skills gaps as its failure to recruit experienced tax professionals has shown.*

*HMRC has invested heavily in new technology; tablets, blackberries, digitisation and a post scanning system, all of which are designed to change the way business is traditionally delivered. Planning is based on a standard of 8 desks for ten and is looking at 6 for 10 whilst Cabinet Office encourages the Civil Service to modernise its working practices through its paper The Way We Work (TW3). Against this background HMRC is consolidating its estate on an unprecedented scale and skilled professionals find themselves in the wrong place at the wrong time and in a position where their invaluable skills may be lost from the organisation. This AGM instructs ARC Committee to impress on HMRC the need to modernise its thinking and to use the new technology it has invested in to do what it is designed to do allowing skilled professionals to continue to work for the good of the Country.*

*This AGM instructs ARC Committee to work with HMRC to explore the use which can be made of technology to allow professionals to work at a distance from Regional Centres through the use of micro offices or home working where other options are exhausted.*

*Committee*

**Paula Houghton**

Paula Houghton for Committee. Ah flexible working. It’s great isn’t it. HMRC says to us here’s new equipment. Here’s a tablet. A Blackberry. And this will help us work flexibly. They talk of good and modern employment practices. And then they say, actually you need to bring all this equipment into a bricks and mortar office and work there. But we’re only going to provide eight desks for every ten of you and actually we might be changing that to six desks for every ten of you. And actually we’re going to close all the local offices so some of you will have to travel for four hours or more a day, carrying all your brilliant flexible working gadgets with you and sit at a desk instead of using it as it was advertised to allow you to work anywhere and on arrival you might or might not get a desk depending on if you’re one of the first 60% of people to actually arrive at the office. Well what we’ve got is a situation where highly trained professional people are being treated like children but you’re not trusted to work anywhere where big brother can’t see that you’re actually beavering away at your desk and it feels like what they mean by flexible working is that you travel however far as necessary to sit in an office for eight hours a day, possibly perched on a stool in a corridor with your tablet on your lap, I’m also the health & safety rep so don’t get me started on the health & safety implications of this, and flexible working means that as well as all that you’re contactable at all other times as well. We need to explore and champion the technology, we need to explore the possibilities of genuine flexible working, and because that will assist us to prevent the loss of skills which may come from the moves to Regional Centres. But we also need to be guarding against flexible working becoming 24 hour working, ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of all our members while supporting these new technologies. Please support the motion.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Paula. Could we have a mover for motion 37 from the West Midlands please? Duncan?

*Motion 37*

*37. (+) That this AGM notes the work that the Cabinet Office is leading on the Government’s smart working programme known as The Way We Work (TW3) and notes with concern that HMRC’s stated policy, of limited flexibility for staff to work at home and remotely from Regional Centres, appears to be out of step with it.*

*This AGM therefore instructs Committee to engage with ExCom to ensure that HMRC catches up with other Civil Service Departments in its approach to TW3. This should include harnessing the power of technology to enable truly effective flexible and remote working, with the aim of securing for HMRC and its employees the Cabinet Office’s stated TW3 benefits of a better lifestyle with positive benefits for recruitment & retention, a reduced carbon footprint, enhanced accommodation of diversity, better mental & physical health, improved productivity and more effective use of property.*

*West Midlands Centre*

**Duncan Gleig**

Duncan Gleig West Midlands supporting these other motions on flexible working. You’ve just heard what Paula said. Ditto. Thank you.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Duncan [applause]. Ok I’ll open it up to debate on motions 36 and 37. No? Ok I’ll move straight to the vote then.

Those in favour of motion 36 please show?

And any against?

That’s clearly carried.

*Motion 36: Carried*

And 37 on behalf on Cambridge please show?

**[Unidentified]**

West Midlands

**Tony Wallace**

West Midlands even. He’s got me obsessed now. Please show.

Thank you any against?

No excellent clearly carried. Thank you.

*Motion 37: Carried*

Just as well I’ve got Vicky here. Motion 38 please in the name of Manchester. Marie.

*Motion 38*

*38. That this AGM believes there are real, measurable, and mutual benefits to homeworking, and that the opposite can often be said of hotdesking at HMRC premises. It instructs Committee to evidence those benefits and negotiate with HMRC with a view to extending use of homeworking including in the transition to Regional Centres.*

*Manchester Centre*

**Marie Hardy**

Good afternoon everybody Marie Hardy from Manchester Centre. I’d like to say just what Paula said. Actually for both my next motions. I will give a little bit more detail though. The motion talks about Committee evidencing the benefits of homeworking as opposed to hotdesking. Hotdesking of course is a shorthand for being crammed into an office where you may not have a desk at all. It’s slightly counter-intuitive to reduce our desk space but we all know that our meeting rooms are absolutely unavailable to book so where are we all going to be working well the answer is that you know we’d be working at home ideally but the evidence that is available to Committee Paula didn’t speak in a lot of detail about the TW3 programme the way we work which is driven by the |Cabinet Office across the whole of the Civil Service, I actually went to a session on it in Civil Service local in the North west a couple of weeks ago as soon as I get the slides I’ll be able to hand that evidence over it’s very well documented it’s it’s got a huge amount of investment behind it and the benefits are clear to anybody who wants to use it for that purpose. I don’t think I need to go on other than to say under that programme the Civil Service is setting up twenty government hubs so it’s similar to our Regional Centre numbers, with 200 mini hubs. These are government hubs we’re part of that government system, you know why can’t we use that flexibility too. Please support that particular motion

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Marie. I’ll move to the vote, I’ll call for speakers motion 38. Helen?

**Helen Baird Parker**

I’ll be quick. Helen Baird Parker from Legal & Governance Centre. But it’s actually to mention I have picked up on TW3 in my equality discussions with the department and I’ve been pushing quite hard on that because obviously TW3 there’s so much in it for us it’s a really good policy but unfortunately HMRC doesn’t really consider it as a policy that they need to apply which is it’s unfortunate that it seems that some of these Cabinet Office policies of course like PMR they really want us to do but apparently TW3 isn’t really one that we’re doing [laughter]. So I don’t know how it is that we define which one is a policy that’s a policy and which one isn’t but they’ve decided that TW3 it’s a bit lacklustre and we don’t really have to do it. And we’re going to do TW3 by doing BOF and through Regional Centres. So it’s a bit light touch but I have been working with the department and I did do some very good work earlier in the year with HMRC’s diversity and inclusion team and with the gender network and the carer’s network looking at flexible working and we did a project together we went out to MoJ together to look at what they’ve got with TW3 and it’s amazing and they’re light years ahead of us and I’ve tried to bring all of that back to HMRC to for us to learn from that and to try and influence best practice so it’s a work in progress and I think that there are tensions in the department as to how far we’re going to go down this route but I just wanted to update AGM on that.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Helen. We have any more speakers on motion 38? No? I’ll move straight to the vote, motion 38 those in favour please show?

And against?

That’s clearly carried.

*Motion 38: Carried*

We’ve got two motions and about four minutes. Motion 39 please in the name of Manchester, talk fast Marie.

*Motion 39*

*39. That this AGM is concerned that interpretation of the TOIL guidance varies wildly within the different Directorates in HMRC and even within Directorates. Some not allowing it at all. When it is inevitable that business as usual dictates certain peaks and troughs, then this AGM instructs Committee to highlight such abuses to HMRC of its own guidance whilst continuing to negotiate that TOIL should be on an hour for hour basis throughout HMRC.*

*Manchester Centre*

**Marie Hardy**

Me again. Marie Hardy Manchester. This is the same motion as we presented in 2014 and I urge conference to endorse it on behalf of Committee, we want to not have any detriment to the policies that are in our HR guidance unfortunately it’s not being implemented in practice. Please support.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Marie. Any other speakers to the motion? Jeremy?

**Jeremy Burrows**

Jeremy Burrows Committee supporting this motion. Five years ago, five years ago I interrupted my walk across Scotland and got on the sleeper to come down to address this AGM on a motion that was essentially identical to this I told a story that I’ll not repeat here but it’s a motion that matters immensely for deep personal reasons to me. The fact that five years on and two motions despite our employer’s aspiration to be a good modern employer we are still having to come back again with essentially the same motion, is nothing short of scandalous. Good modern employer? Well it’s one of those three things. Must improve. Support the motion.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Jeremy. Any other contributions on motion 39? I’ll move straight to the cote then. Those in favour please show?

Thank you any against?

No that’s clearly carried.

*Motion 39: Carried*

Motion 40 on the name of Bristol from Mr Gareth Hills please.

*Motion 40*

*40. That this AGM notes the motions which were passed at the 2015 AGM on the subject of flexible working (motions 22 and 23) and that HMRC does not appear to have yet clarified its stance on flexible working in the light of Building our Future and current government policy. AGM therefore directs Committee to continue the dialogue with HMRC on this subject with a view to realising the goals set out in the motions referred to and obtaining the commitment of the employer to the support of flexible working arrangements in line with the rest of the Civil Service.*

*Bristol Centre*

 **Gareth Hills**

Gareth Hills Bristol. This is actually a TW3 motion. There’s the two motions that are references of a pass at last year’s AGM, we’re about TW3 for those of you who may not know that’s The Way We Work. As Marie’s just said a Cabinet Office policy which HMRC seems to have a different attitude to than other Civil Service employers as we found out from around the Executive Committee table of FDA. Now members in Bristol are fortunate to be located in one of HMRC’s thirteen Regional Centres. I deliberately say members in Bristol rather than ARC Bristol members because following its demise, colleagues from the former South West Centre are now part of ARC Bristol Centre. And it was with those members from deeper in the south west in mind outside RDT, facing office closures, and a seemingly inflexible HMRC approach to remote and mobile working, that our Centre discussed and agreed to put forward this motion. I’ve recently got my Surface Pro, I’m still experimenting with it, but by tethering it to the HMRC Blackberry I’ve been able to successfully access HMRC’s systems each time I’ve used it. I can open and edit documents on it far easier than I ever could on my Blackberry. I use a Samsung tablet for my FDA work, an accompanying dongle means I can access FDA systems whenever and wherever I want. That combination of Surface Pro and Blackberry, of Samsung tablet an iPhone and dongle, means I have all the technology I need to work remotely and securely on HMRC and FDA business. Now members in Bristol understand that HMRC is not going to reverse its decision to consolidate estates. And members in Bristol understand the importance of physical attendance at offices, of the need for face to face interaction. But what members in Bristol do not understand is HMRC’s attitude to remote and mobile working. Mentioned elsewhere across the Civil Service, employers are using that TW3 report to encourage and embrace flexible working including remote and mobile. So why is it that HMRC adopts a seemingly negative and backward-looking approach. One fixated on bricks and mortar rather than encouraging flexibility and technology. I’m not sure I’m sure I’m not alone in being impressed by HMRC’s investment in the tablets, indeed I think it’s something this union should welcome. But HMRC needs to do more than invest in IT. It needs to invest in trusting and empowering its staff. It needs to invest and develop in a modern approach to flexible working including remote and mobile access. Because that positive approach to flexibility will help diversity, some of those issues we’ve heard about earlier, but it will also crucially help HMRC retain its people

**Tony Wallace**

Gareth

 **Gareth Hills**

Their skills and their experiences. A fixation with bricks and mortar jeopardises that. A positive approach to TW3 will help HMRC [laughter] position itself as a progressive employer with the people we need to deliver the business post-2020. So our challenge: fixate on bricks and mortar, or embrace technology and the opportunities it brings. Fixate, or flourish. HMRC, the choice is yours.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Gareth. Are there any other speakers to the motion? Oh [inaudible]. Are there any other speakers to the motion? No. I’ll move straight to the vote then, on motion 40 all those in favour please show?

And any against?

That is clearly carried Thank you.

*Motion 40: Carried*

Thank you colleagues that brings us to the end of the business today and thank you all for setting a fairly quick pace this afternoon. Couple of things about tonight just before you rush off. We have Edward Troup and Jon Thompson both addressing us at dinner this evening but I’ve had Edward in touch with me today to say that he’s going to have to go back to London at 9 o’clock I’m expecting that there’s quite a lot of business going on for the chief executive of HMRC at the moment. What we’re going to try to do to fit in the speeches is compress the drinks reception from 6.30 to 7 o’clock rather than carrying on to 7.15 and we’ve cleared that [?] I think that’s right with the the university. So if you can please be at the drinks reception which is in the Trent building, [?] what room’s it in?

[inaudible]

**Tony Wallace**

Ok. Ok. We will have our usual lovely two gentlemen to see you in later on this evening, please be there prompt, drinks at 6, finish at 7, sit down quickly, and we’ll try and get through edward’s speeches and maybe I’ll say some other wish as well. Catch you later. Bye bye now.

**Wednesday 13th April**

**Tony Wallace**

Good morning colleagues. Could I ask you to take your chairs quickly please we’ve got quite a lot of business this morning thank you.

Good morning colleagues. If I can ask you just to settle down please we have got an awful lot to get through this morning I’m conscious that we’re due to finish at twelve o’clock so I would dearly like to get all the business through if we possibly can. I hope you enjoyed yourselves yesterday evening and you’re feeling suitably refreshed this morning. Just before we start I would just like to welcome William Hague who’s joined us at the back, William will be addressing us after the first block of motions and he’s quite happy to take some questions and answers once he has given his presentation. You’re very welcome, welcome William.

# Travel & Subsistence

Ok I’m going to start straight off with motions 41 42 and 43 which are in common debate from the North East Liverpool and Glasgow on the subject of travel and subsistence could I ask for the motion mover of motion number 41 please from the North East ? Hi Julie.

*Motion 41*

*41. (+) This AGM notes the recent reduction and restrictions to T&S were applied inconsistently across directorates and regions. This AGM instructs Committee to discuss with the department and establish the reasons behind, and the impact of, these changes.*

*North East Centre*

**Julie Blayney**

Morning everyone. As the first person to speak at an ARC AGM the morning after the dinner can I just say thank you to everyone for turning up and so far looking quite awake. I’m Julie Blayney North East Centre moving this motion. Hopefully you can all see the logic in it. There have been several problems brought about by the recent changes to some T&S policies not least training is often centralised it’s placed in locations that are easier to get to for people such as London, Nottingham maybe. That’s fine if you’re only going to put one training course on and it’s in London if you give your staff the money to then get a train to London. If you put the training course on in London and you then say no one outside of London can attend, that’s not ok. Also there’s a health and safety aspect to this. Someone that I’m aware of recently attended a three hour meeting five hours drive away from where they were and they couldn’t get a hotel bill approved for that night so they had a five hour drive, a three hour meeting, a five hour drive. I don’t think that’s ok either. And finally the non-direct costs involved in this. If people have to book the cheapest possible option at all times, sometimes that means sitting on a train platform for three or four hours waiting for a train. If that’s the case we have to consider that impact of their time and what that’s worth to the department. Basically this motion asks that we consider T&S, it’s absolutely right that we minimise that where we absolutely can but it should be done in a way that doesn’t damage the business. Thank you. Please support the motion.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Julie. Could I have a mover please for motion 42 in the name of Liverpool.

*Motion 42*

*42. (+) That this AGM instructs Committee to seek commitment from Large Business that T&S for training is part of a separate cost centre and budget. This would ring-fence funds not just relating to a trainee’s tutorials/exams but for internal and external meetings that are essential to their learning and development*

*Liverpool Centre*

**Catherine O’Brien**

Hello. Catherine O’Brien in Liverpool first. [Applause]. It’s a similar thread but it’s more around training so we’ve split it into SME and SB and LB and because LB haven’t kept a separate budget for the trainees it’s meant that all the LB trainees have had less opportunity to do things if it’s not bringing in customer yield or whatever you can’t do something that’s purely for your development which seems a bit unfair and a bit impractical. The trickiest part of it is that there’s requests going to BLMs for training needs for external meetings with the caveat that they are MSB or SME trainees which makes me feel really hurt inside. Yes it’s discrimination on something we didn’t have a choice about when we came into the training programme and it’s just a bit silly. So please support the motion that LB start to have a separate cost for their trainees so we can all do the same thing that would be great. Support the motion. Yay.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Cathy. And a mover for motion number 43 in the name of Glasgow. Andy.

*Motion 43*

*43. (+) That this AGM notes with concern that constraints on the Travel and Subsistence budget in 2015/16 have had a negative impact on members' ability to attend training and to do their job effectively. This AGM instructs Committee to advise the board of HMRC that their staff will not be able to continue to deliver the increasing demands laid on them if they do not provide us with the necessary resources.*

*Glasgow Centre*

**Andy Nixon**

Andy Nixon Glasgow Centre. Yes I’m not going to go everything you’ve got down here because a lot of it has been said. I would point out that for the business delaying training and for Large Business we actually delayed the regional technical updates from last year into this year, is ridiculous for the almost trivial costs involved compared to the amount of money we’re bringing in. It does not make business sense there are cases where there’s no immediate tax yield but we’re progressing a case and not being able to progress that case by a meeting is financially nonsense. The interest on some of these cases for the cost of that meeting the day of the meeting is probably bigger than the cost of the T&S would have been. It’s absurd to keep on, to actually be delaying our work delivering what the customers what the taxpayers and the government want us to do simply because we the money’s in the wrong bucket for actually paying those costs it’s absurd we really need to get on top of this, this is a management failure at the highest level that we’re not able to do our jobs for a lack of basic resources. Please support all three motions.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Andy. These three motions are in common debate so I’ll open up the debate to the hall. Graham? Good morning. Dancing shoes?

**Graham Black**

Good morning Graham Black Glasgow Centre but actually I’ll be speaking more with my Large Business hat on than anything else. I think a lot of the problems that actually occurred in T&S last year were related to Large Business I think in particular I think the main issues actually arose there and I think we’ve got [inaudible] I am part of that management team [inaudible] delegate mentioned there and actually we do recognise that that we did not have enough budget for T&S and we didn’t take account of the fact that there was going to be a very big impact in the budget from the increase in the number of trainees that we had and it did have a detrimental effect on the business it had a detrimental effect on people who are actually the not just trainees but people doing the business generally. That has been recognised and everything is in place to ensure that we have a sensible T&S budget it is right that we actually monitor and manage that budget sensibly that we do things at the cheapest public cost and that will be continue to be part of what we’re doing, but it’s not right that we should be getting in the way of doing the business and training and developing people the way we want to so I don’t see that problem in terms of the LB budget arising in the future but we do take on board the detrimental impact it had on people last year and we do apologise for that and we’ll try and make sure that it doesn’t happen again. Thank you.

On I can entirely understand the three motions and therefore I’m not in any way suggesting we shouldn’t support the motions.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Graham. Do we have any more contributions from the floor.

**Ross Starkie**

Ross Starkie Liverpool Centre MSB trainee we had a separate budget like the one that’s been requested in motion 42 it was brilliant we had stuff that came out from BLMs and Large Business BLMs so some of them were like we can’t we don’t have the budget to take LB people we’ll take MSB people however this year in the new financial year MSB are now running on their budget in Liverpool especially as going through the MSB general budget so I hope that those issues don’t get reciprocated like Large Business do so hopefully it will be ok but I just support this motion.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Ross. Christine?

[Inaudible]

**Christine Suddaby**

Christine Suddaby from Leeds Centre. I work in Business Tax but in a small niche area called CTIS CT International Stamps very often I find myself at St Pancras or Kings Cross waiting for trains what I get really frustrated about is CDIO don’t seem to play by the same rules I don’t know why that should be but they get on trains and just pay the excess whereas I have to stick to my fixed ticket I’m not allowed to pay the excess I just think if we’re having T&S restrictions on our trainees and on our other staff members it should apply across the board and one half of the department shouldn’t have rules that apply that are different to everybody else. Thank you.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Christine. Any more from the floor? No. There’s been nothing in opposition to the motions so there’s no right of reply I’m going to move straight to a vote.

Motion 41 please from North East all those in favour can you please show.

Thank you are there any against?

 No that’s clearly carried. Oh. It’s carried.

*Motion 41: Carried*

Motions 42 in the name of Liverpool all those in favour could you show please?

Thank you. And any against?

That’s clearly carried.

*Motion 42: Carried*

And motion 43 from Glasgow all those in favour please show.

Thank you and any against?

No that’s also clearly carried.

*Motion 43: Carried*

Thanks very much colleagues.

# William Hague, HMRC Chief People Officer

**Tony Wallace**

I’d like to welcome William Hague now I’m genuinely not going to make much of an introduction for William because we are now pressed for time. I am delighted he’s made it here he has an extremely busy day job and he’s only 12 months late, not bad William, thank you very much.

**William Hague**

Colleagues good morning. Thank you for having me twelve months late. For those of you who don’t know me my name is William Hague I’m the Chief People Officer for HMRC and yes my name is William Hague I’m not the ex-Foreign Secretary and it was a joy this morning to get in the taxi and not to have a disappointed look on his face as he said oh I thought you were going to be the real William Hague, he didn’t do that this morning I’ve had that so many times over the last few years but I think that now that the ex Foreign Secretary has left Parliament my life is going to get easier.

Now I wanted to start just by saying something about the relationship that we as an employer and ExCom have with ARC and it was something that Tony touched on last night which is I don’t think it was just by accident that the first meeting that Edward had in his new role with Jon and Edward sat in the meeting was with me Tony Edward and Jon. And I do think that demonstrates the strength of relationship and partnership that we have between ourselves as ExCom the employer and ARC and it should be that way. You are the professional body that represents the professions and the leaders of this organisation and although we should challenging relationships we should have a strong one and so I just wanted to start by saying those general comments which is that I think we have a strong and effective working relationship with you and I want that to continue. And I think at the moment of the conversations that we’re having about Building Our Future and conversations we’re having about workplaces locations estates, which I know there were a number of conversations and discussions about yesterday. And also changes that are coming forth throughout the whole of the Civil Service we’re having those strong conversations with you as the professional body. And I believe and I know my ExCom colleagues believe that we can trust you in every single one of those conversations and we are very happy and continue to have confidential open discussions with you and that has to continue as we go through and the word that was used last night by both Edward and Tony transformation. We’re going through a huge transformation in this organisation and for us to do it well we’ve got to have that relationship we have to listen to you we have to have our ears open and we need that challenging open conversation so I wanted to start by saying thank you and I look forward to that continuing with the Exec and with Vicky and Paul leading it’s really it is really important to us. And it’s worth saying that relationships don’t happen by accident. I joined this department coming on for about what three years ago now, and I walked into some difficult times and Gareth’s there standing at the back and we had some trying times there was industrial action over PMR and that was a challenging time for both of us and I just loved the fact that we worked through that it was a challenging time we saw what our differences were we found common ground and then we moved forward. And I look at where we are now and it just makes me feel even more strongly than I did then, we never need to we never want to get into that position again and these things need to be worked at, I have two small boys Daniel and James, one is one year old one is three years old and their relationship didn’t happen by accident. They didn’t start by loving one another even though I read Daniel the same book for six months before James was born, Mummy’s tummy is a house [laughter], and I was explaining that a baby was going to come and it was going to be a brother, when he arrived in the first week Daniel said to me Daddy when is he going home [laughter].

And I although that’s absolutely true the point that I’m trying to make is if you just let things happen by accident they don’t happen and this is a relationship we need to work on and I am committed to that and we you know we had ExCom in Nottingham in Castle Meadow yesterday and the conversation I had as I said obviously Edward you are speaking to ARC colleagues at the ARC dinner tonight and I’m speaking again tomorrow and one of the things that we committed to is that we need to have an open honest partnership of a relationship with you and need to work at it and we’re committed to that. And we need to be committed to it because the word that was used a lot last night in the speeches was transformation. We are going through challenging times. When you look at what we got in the spending review it was phenomenal for this organisation. Jon Thompson coming in as our new Chief Executive as the Perm Sec for the MoD his mind was blown when he sat down and I said we’ve been taking him through Building Our Future we’ve been taking him through our plans, he’s been walking round the civilian parts of the MoD and the military parts of the MoD talking about how they’re going to make their 30% cuts , we’re talking about how are we going to transform this organisation with the 1.2 billion pounds of investment we’ve been given. That is a remarkable conversation to be having, at the same time it brings us into some very difficult decisions I know you were talking about Regional Centres yes they’re talking about training talking about what it means for the leaders of this organisation it isn’t easy and that’s why we need to work together on it.

And so when I thought what do I haven’t got long I know you’ve got a packed agenda and I do want to open out for questions, so where do I want to focus and I was thinking through what should I talk about. I thought about pay and thought no {laughter], bottom line is with pay Treasury have set one percent over this parliament it’s not going to change that’s where we are. Yesterday ExCom we were going through the delegated pay grades and the SCS how we’re going to spend the one percent I can tell you it’s not easy to work out how to spend one percent across 60 thousand people and because you can’t deal with the structural issues with one percent being honest with you so we’re doing what we can. I know all the debates and we have them with you over specialist pay I’m not going to go there but we are well aware and we know the positions within ARC and I’ve no doubt we’re going to speak to you in the coming years on pay within one percent. I could talk to you about PMR, every time please no, every time I go out and speak to staff which I do on a regular basis I do get out of London, and I speak to staff around the country I usually end up with a 40 minute Q&A on PMR. Not going to do that, that is the system that we have in place and we as leaders and you as leaders in this organisation need to help it work and we’ve got to streamline it we’ve got to make it as fair as possible, Civil Service Board covering the whole of the Civil Service discussed PMR just a few weeks ago and committed to it for the next few years it is here to stay. Although what they did do is agree that they would do a pilot looking at something slightly different so a part of the Civil Serice is going to do a pilot and I’ll keep you up to date on that and when I can announce I will do. Although there was a little leak yesterday so some of you might know where that is going to be but there is going to be a pilot and we’ll look at that.

I could talk about travel and subsistence, I’m not going to go there, what I do want to talk about is just transformation and give a couple of thoughts. We’ve got 1.2 billion it is to make the Building Our Future vision a reality and I want to thank you for the work that you’ve done in phases one two and three for those who’ve been involved and I know many of you have been for us helping to communicate and start to make the vision a reality. We know it’s about improving customer service and getting better on the phones and delivering that, but also the digital transformation of the organisation. At ExCom yesterday we were going around and having a look at the changes and progress that we’re making we spent time with the Making Tax Digital team and we were particularly looking at the personal tax account as we sit here today there are one million people in the personal tax account the stretched target that we’re giving ourselves for this year is to get the personal tax account up to seven million people. So I just want to say as we’re here now over the next few months the way that we do business and the way that we interact with our customers is fundamentally changing and that’s what the 1.2 billion is about making that a reality and ensuring that we as an organisation can flex to deliver it.

So we’ve got the digital offering. We’re investing in compliance the compliance activity I don’t need to go through that promote prevent respond, and we continue to invest in that. We’re investing in the new estate so Building Our Future locations, I am the SRO for that and I would expect some of you questions at the end to b regarding that that’s just over four hundred million pounds that we are investing into a new estate moving to Regional Centres transitional sites and to those specialist sites. We had a gateway review just three weeks ago on our Regional Centre plans and they’re coming along really well, we got an amber for that because the review team didn’t believe that we’d be able to do it within the budget set they said it’s a property thing it’s going to cost at least fifty percent more than 400 million what are you going to do, but as we’re here now we currently in Croydon we’re cutting deals in Croydon on the estate we’re going to have there we’re currently in Belfast and Bristol and doing the same. At the same time we’re looking elsewhere where we might need to take on transitional sites for an interim period before we move in a Regional Centre, this is happening right now we are investing that money we’ve brought in Turner and Townsend who are a top global consultancy on commercial deals in property to support us with it, it’s happening it’s happening right now and so we are truly transforming in the midst of this and you will know many of you presented facilitated at Building Our Future, that a key part of that is investing in our people. Now you’ve seen over the last twelve months that we’ve invested in the leadership academy and I was delighted to see that again we’ve partnered in skills development, that you have some training put on at the last couple of days over the last couple of days and I know that they were well attended and they went down well we’re investing in the leadership academy. Just a few years ago three or four years ago when you looked at how much we as an employer invested particularly in leaders and specialists in this organisation it wasn’t at the level that it should have been. Just for Building Our Future over the last two years just on presenters and facilitating courses we spent over 1.2 million ; in the leadership academy we’re investing millions. But I know that yesterday concerns were raised around the Tax Academy tax training and the future of that as well and we discussed that at ExCom as well yesterday. And I’m not stood here saying we have got all the answers as we transform and as we make this a reality and invest this money and what we need to do is take what we’ve got, make it better, take sensible decisions, and listen to people in this organisation and you’re an important group of people you’re a very important partner that we need to listen to in this, and so what we heard about the Tax Academy we hear, we need to look at how we modernise the way that we deliver our tax learning we need to do that. We need to talk to people out there who are doing it in the private sector in a more digital way you know ICAST [?] and others and we’ve got to learn from there and we hear that and we haven’t got all the answers but what we do have is the passion to move forward and to improve the way that we do that.

So there’s a huge amount there in transformation. We need to do that together. We do have I have open ears to how we can improve the role of the Tax Academy whether it be the way that we move to regional locations, whether it be the way that the digitalisation of our services changes each of our jobs, we need to work together on that and I absolutely commit to doing so.

A couple of final things that I just wanted to say, one about Building Our Future phase four and then finally on locations and then stop and open to questions. On Building Our Future phase four I hope many of you know it starts on the 25th of April so that’s in a week and a half’s time. Instead of going out to five thousand leaders we’re going out to twelve thousand so we’re going out to twelve thousand people and thank you to many of you for being presenters and facilitators and for being part of that and delivering that. We’re going out to twelve thousand leaders because we know the challenge that we have to make Building Our Future a reality and so that we felt we needed to bring more people into that cohort of leaders who were going to understand the transformation were going through the challenges on them. We’re then going to give a great deal more freedom as to how that is then communicated out to the rest of the department so from the 27th of May onwards those leaders that’s you and colleagues are going to go out there have products but we’re not going to organise buildings or rooms you will do that as you see fit because you know your people and you know your professional colleagues as well so that’s what we’re going to do and I sincerely hope you get into that and are a part of that.

I think we should have done that earlier, we should have widened out the leadership community and we should have had a more open way of communicating early on with this but I think it’s a bit like you fall into a habit of the way that you do things and it doesn’t always meet the needs and I think that’s probably for the Tax Academy as well and the way that we’ve been continuing to do good specialised learning but hasn’t been as flexible as we could have made it and as modernised as we could have made it. I don’t know about you, I get I give up things for Lent and I gave up coffee for Lent this year and I don’t know if anybody’s a big coffee drinker and then stops, I didn’t realise how difficult it was but it was agony. I had shivers, sweats, and I had a constant headache for ten and a half days. Ten and a half days some bad decisions were taken [laughter] Lots of ibuprofen and paracetamol got me through, I can honestly say to you I had no idea what habit I’d got into with drinking coffee. I’d no idea how addicted I was to it and how I was completely oblivious to it, totally. And so when I gave it up I didn’t even think it would have much of an impact on me. Now I’m really careful just before I came in I’d had an earl grey tea, blooming awful, but it’s better than keeping drinking the coffee. I share that because I think that some of the ways that we and by we I mean us as leaders but also as ExCom, the way that we think maybe about tax training or training, the way that we thought about Building Our Future and communicating you can get into a habit and not think that actually by speaking to four and a half thousand people there’s at least seven thousand who are feeling constricted by that. We talk about empowerment and then the way that we do something quite rigid down the lines and giving people speaking notes says I don’t find this very empowering and so we need to listen to you and your feedback and to that of colleagues and act on that and so that’s what we’re trying to do. It’s not quite the same as being addicted to coffee but I hope you understand the analogy.

And then the final thing is because it’s close to me at the moment as SRO for Building Our Future locations. I do think we’ve taken sensible decisions on the Regional Centres. They are not, they’re not easy decisions, they’re not easy decisions at all. I was down in Portsmouth three and a half four weeks ago and that is a transitional site so will be there till 2025 2026 but will then close and I had a Q&A with all the staff there afterwards and it’s really difficult and people are saying well we might be here for ten years and you say that’s a positive message but the bottom line is in ten years HMRC’s not going to be here in this area, oh and by the way it already feels like we’re beginning to wither on the vine as trainees go elsewhere and so a transitional site isn’t everything we expect it to be. These are difficult choices and decisions that we’re taking but ultimately when you look at the feedback about the state of our estate and how people feel about they’ve been invested in, we had to make a decision. Mapeley 2021 we had to take a decision by 2019 we felt that this was the way to get the investment and to modernise the department. There can be arguments about flexible working why are you making people work in a Regional Centre when you can move to services and be working from home. Again that was another we didn’t just take a random decision we agonised over that we looked at Google and Microsoft, they work from what they call motherships so they don’t just flexibly nobody coming into a key office, because of the importance of leadership and communication they bring people into one place and that’s why we’ve carefully thought it through and decided Regional Centres everybody will have their home base. Everybody will work from there but we will give people the opportunity for flexible working with their services and then we will see how that goes. But we are not going to be moving towards home working and we are going to be moving towards Regional Centres. Again difficult decisions but thought through. And the final thing I would encourage you to do on the estates side is visit the showcases Nottingham I was in there again yesterday I’ve been a few times, it shows what can be done with the space when you think about it and invest in it and how you can flexibly work ten people to eight desks, and two new showcases have started this week in Newcastle and Salford, I encourage you to encourage your people and your colleagues and peers to do that.

So there we have it. I’ve gone on a bit too long. We’re going through a huge transformation, we need to do that together, we expect you to challenge us and we will listen because we haven’t got all the answers but together we probably have. Thank you.

[Applause]

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you William.

I’ll open up the hall to questions.

Marie at the back

**Marie Hardy**

Hi William my name’s Marie Hardy from Manchester Centre. I understand our locations strategy and you know that a decision’s been taken but we’re getting messaging from across the Civil Service around the TW3 programme and I think HMRC needs to be clear about why we’re different. Have you got anything you can tell us about that?

**William Hague**

TW3, flexible working, and the whole new ways of working across the Civil Service. We are tied in with TW3, we are spending time with the Cabinet Office team over there talking now to them looking at how they’re working. They see us still as a partner in that work, they recognise that we want to move to a Regional Centre, they recognise the challenges that we have through teamwork both through not just compliance but our contact Centres, and as we put the Regional Centres into place and it’s going to be Croydon first next year, we’re going to bring them in with us and they’re going to see the way that we’re working, how we intend to put those principles into place. But , but, we’re still being very clear that we’re expecting people to be homed in a Regional Centre and then this is going to be an iterative process this is nine years to go through all these Regional Centres particularly over the next five, the first three Croydon Belfast Bristol. We will be working through that together, not practicing but we are going to be trialling and piloting and let’s come back to that next year I’ll come along let’s talk about how that’s gone in Croydon and see where we are with that. We are committed to those principles, at the same time we’ve had a leadership difficulty in this department we have the lowest engagement score we’re 93rd out of 96 and it has something to do with visible leadership in dispersed teams. I’m not saying this is the whole answer but it is part of that and if I could just say as well about TW3 and diversity because Vicky and I spoke about his last night and I didn’t say anything about diversity. One of the things we need to make sure with our Regional Centres is that we’re representing our communities and we are linking in with the [inaudible] and there is something about diversity in the mix of that as well. Thank you.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you. I’ll take a question from Graham if somebody else wants to ask a question can you just indicate I’ll watch out for you we’ll send the microphone across. I’ve got you Christine. Graham?

**Graham Black**

Hi I’m Graham Black from Large Business. Yeah I’ve just said there’s lots of difficult decisions and lots of difficult implications from a lot of the Building Our Future for people particularly if they’re not in the Regional Centre. For those who will be part of that those Regional Centres one of the real positives of this coming out was about the breadth of careers and career options and the ability of us perhaps to have a wider range across all the regions . It is you know do you never feel that policy jobs for example are going to be spread around the regions because at the moment I’m not seeing much of an indication that that’s part of the big Line of Business planning unless there are real pressure from yourselves and ExCom to make sure that actually does work because it was one of the really big key positives that we were hanging a lot of the messages on.

**William Hague**

Graham that again a great question and I love the fact that you raised the word positives because I’m trying to focus I was looking at your motions yesterday and speaking to Paula and Vicky and others about the conversation being had and I wanted to go into some of those issues. I can sometimes be told that I’m a bit overbearing and too passionately Tigger-like about how positive it’s going to be, given the challenges it has on people so that’s why I was in that space. I remain enthusiastic passionate and positive that we are going to create career pathways in the Regional Centres. If we go back two years when we set out the principles and we communicated it in Building Our Future one, why we’re moving to Regional Centres, we’re moving there because we want to bring this organisation dispersed organisation 170 centres into 13 we want to be close to the local communities and great universities and one of the key things for me and have a great estate with a great infrastructure which is going to be digital. One of the strongest things for me was career pathways because in my first year in this organisation when I was going around trainees and other colleagues were saying unless I’m willing to move to London and the south east my career stops at and you could say anything – S, grade 7, certainly grade 6, and people would say how many SCS are round the regions, how many directors are in the regions and so it has to be the case that as we move to our Regional Centres we have all parts of the business in every single location we’re not going to have a perfect mix but we have to have career pathways out there, we have to have policy out of London in various other places, now how far we can disperse that we’re still working through. You will notice that although we announced on the 12th November here are the locations, what we didn’t do straight away is then say oh and this is what each line of business footprint looks like because we’re working through that right now. But I hope you see when that comes out that you can see how there is going to be a dispersal of it around the country and I still feel quite passionate although we’ve said SCS in every Regional Centre I’d love to see directors in each Regional Centre. I’m not sure about the motion you passed yesterday as an ExCom people dispersed in each Regional Centre but do you know when I came into this department I said why have I got so many as HR and CPO why have I got some people in Nottingham because I forget how many years ago was it 19 years ago we moved up to twenty of us moved to Castle Meadow and my predecessor director general moved up there as well. Now moving to Regional Centre models is that therefore feasible again for ExCom to be able to move out as well, yeah I think it is, we’re not planning on doing it just yet. Does that answer it Graham?

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks. Christine.

**Christine Suddaby**

Hi. Most of my colleagues since my colleagues work in Parliament Street and the decision in London was Croydon or Stratford and lines of business haven’t yet decided whether they’re going to go to both Croydon AND Stratford, or Croydon OR Stratford, has there been thoughts about how that might impact because some people said I cannot get to Croydon or I cannot get to Stratford therefore as soon as a decision is made they will jump ship which could potentially leave huge policy holes in London in the work that policy teams are doing. Do we know how lines of business is sorting that out or is there any direction from ExCom on that?

**William Hague**

That’s a really good question. Yes we’re acutely aware of it, you are right. One of the risks as you would expect in my risk methodology is brain drain it’s not quite described like that but as we go through this, so there are migration workshops happening as we speak I think there’s another one today and tomorrow going through each of the Regional Centres in each area of the country so you have senior representatives from each line of business working out where would we move teams to, whether that be Stratford or Croydon, looking at personal circumstances where we can in terms of how many people travel from you know what do we think the RDT will be and obviously as we’re going through Croydon we’re doing two and a half thousand one-to-ones at the moment for our early changes and early moves we’re beginning to learn how many people are in RDT how many people are willing to make the move and how many aren’t, so we’re beginning to grow in our behavioural understanding of it. The migration workshops are happening, but then one of the key parts of it is then the one-to-ones. So we can do all the perfect paper planning in the world but it’s when each individual has that one-to-one to say ok this work that is currently in Parliament Street is in Croydon or it’s in Stratford, can you move will you move and it will only be after those one-to-ones that we get the full picture of how many people do we think we will lose and what expertise do we think we will lose, do we need to put interim measures in place to ensure that that doesn’t happen, and we made a clear commitment early on in this that we do not want to lose expertise and where we can transition people across to Regional Centres we will do that and we’re working through those details now. There is there is no simple clinical way of doing it, there’s doing the planning with the migration workshops that we’re doing at the moment, there is then the one-to-ones there is then putting it into practice. We’ve committed to doing the one-to-ones at least a year before a move takes place which is why so many thousands of one-to-ones have taken place in Enforcement and Compliance over the last few weeks and we’re just about to kick off with another phase. I want us to announce what we’re doing in terms of those migration plans as soon as possible. The difficulty that we’ve got is it is complicated and also we need to do it we can’t have some line of business going ahead of others we need to do it together and at exactly the same time we’re entering more amounts of purdah than you’ve ever seen in your life, what with devolved administrations local elections something’s happening on June 23rd regarding a possible but not supported Brexit from government and so when we announce it it’s deeply constrained.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks William

**William Hague**

I hope that’s helpful.

**Tony Wallace**

Time for one more. Michelle?

**Michelle [?]**

My question kind of leads on from Christine’s. I have a small team in Norwich and they are excellent. I had a phone call with them this week about a team day we’re planning one of my strategies to sort of manage the exit is to kind of squeeze them dry like a sponge and try and get all their expertise out of them. But I put the phone down from that really great conversation with three really positive people who are performing brilliantly and I just thought, this is so sad just so sad it really was emotional for me and I thought to myself do you know what, I same as Christine said, all of that brilliant investigative experience is going, but as well as that my question really is around if you repeat that small I know it’s a microcosm of what’s going to happen all across the department, how are you going to maintain engagement. I’m not complaining actually about how it’s been done because I think the department’s worked really hard in Norwich, very sensitively to try and get as good an outcome as they possibly can for those people, which is ok for the first but what about the 51st, but how are you going to maintain even maintain the appalling engagement scores that we have, you know, in the context of that sadness because I’ll get over it I’ll carry on my team will be a different team we’ll still achieve what have you, but the sadness is still in my heart.

**William Hague**

That’s a really challenging question and it’s the right question, and I could be stood up here an hour trying to answer that because in this room is the answer to that in terms of how we’re going to maintain engagement, how we’re going to improve engagement, the only way it can be done it through leaders in this room and throughout the organisation leading us through it. As I said, I asked around my colleagues and colleagues here where is this being most difficult at the moment and is it Chesterfield that are closing in the next few months, actually the answer was no because they have an absolute certainty of when and what and what their options are. I was told to get out to the transitional centres and so I went out to Portsmouth and you know you just talked about the feeling of the team you were talk about, I came back from Portsmouth really feeling it. I’[d been there with hundreds of staff I spent all day them there were some brilliant people there, there were some grads there some tax trainees and one of whom was a single mum doing an amazing job who said when we go I can’t come with you, I can’t I’ve got my family I’ve got my child and you know as a young dad I’ve really felt it and we sat round and we had a decision we had an estates discussion in ExCom the next day and I just shared it for the first ten minutes and said this is what we’re going through. We aren’t doing this thoughtlessly. It is going to be for some people in this organisation really difficult especially as they joined a department they thought they’d be with for life and some of them aren’t going to come with us and we’re going to lose expertise and something really brilliant as well. At the same time we had no there is no ‘do nothing’ option, the Mapeley contract is up in 2021. When we went out in Building Our Future when you look at the free text in the staff survey what’s one of the things that comes back you don’t invest in us look at hygiene factors look at the state of our buildings and one of the other things that comes back about why are our leadership scores so poor and Sarah’s here as head of the engagement team she could tell you far more than I can, everything she tells me lots I remember little bits because she knows everything, but dispersed leadership has a part to play in that we have one of the most dispersed leaderships in the whole of the Civil Service. I started off as a Job Centre manager in DWP I had 63 staff they were all there in two buildings within a hundred yards of each other now that’s not completely normal but the amount of dispersal we have does lead at times to suboptimal outcomes and so we’ve got the investment we’ve got the 2021 [?] platform and we have a future that we want and it’s digital and it means needing good infrastructure good digital good ways of doing business and this is the choice that we’ve taken and it is going to be a difficult transformation but I promise you that for those in Regional Centres and those in the specialist sites it will feel like a completely different organisation. If you go and stand in the Nottingham showcase, go to Salford go to Newcastle. That is what all our buildings are going to look like. We’ve got the money we are spending the money we are investing it. It is not pie in the sky. By 2021 most of the Regional Centres are going to be stood up and we’re going to be in them. Hopefully.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks William. Now William’s got to rush back to London I think you’ve got a lot of business to do but thank you very much for taking the time this morning

**William Hague**

Thank you. Thank you for your time.

[Applause]

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks colleagues. We’re running about 8 or 9 minutes behind schedule but I think we can catch up through the day.

# Pay

**Tony Wallace**

We move on to a block of motions on pay now. The first motion 44 stands on its own from Committee Vicky please, thank you.

*Motion 44*

*44. That this AGM is angered that once again the Chancellor has decided that the heavy lifting of economic reconstruction should be borne by public sector workers. The imposition of a 1% pay cap for the life of this Government will inevitably lead to further worsening of the terms and conditions offered to ARC members and will do nothing to solve the increasingly dysfunctional nature of our pay system.*

*AGM endorses ARC’s 2016 Pay Policy paper which calls for a system of pay and reward which:*

* *allows HMRC to recruit, and retain the very highest calibre of tax professional*
* *allows staff to progress through pay scales within no longer than 5 years*
* *eliminates unlawful discrimination and promote diversity*
* *includes annually revalorised cost of living increases*
* *removes any performance related pay elements to any pay system*
* *uses increases in base pay as the mechanism of reward*
* *Includes a pay comparability exercise for jobs at ARC grades.*
* *rewards the skill gained by trainees as they move through their course.*
* *Brings Legal Trainees back within Band T pay arrangements.*

*Committee*

**Vicky Johnson**

Vicky Johnson Committee asking you to support motion 44. Our pay policy document that’s in the pack that you’ve had a chance to read talks about groundhog day. It feels a little bit like that for me, since 2009 I’ve stood up every year and spoken to a pay motion, the only difference this year is I’m speaking to Committee’s rather than West Midlands’, The motion is calling for a system of pay and reward that any modern employer could be proud of, we’re continuously told that the public sector should reform and become a good modern employer but it seems to us that this is advocated by a government that seeks only to reduce our standard of living by continually eroding our take home pay with spurious deductions allegedly for pension, removing our progression pay, capping our pay rise at one percent, and telling us Britain deserves a pay rise as they do it. So please support this motion to enable us to talk to the employer to try and do something about it.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Vicky. Do we have any speaker s to motion 44? Sarah.

**Sarah Guerra**

Hello Sarah Guerra from London 100 Parliament Street Centre. Obviously I support the motion. I suppose for me it’s about thinking about what William just said, that there is a constraint, the Treasury has said there’s going to be one percent. So we can write all the pay policy papers we want identifying all the things that we think we want, but it’s effectively a waste of paper if we’re not going to find a way to campaign and affect the government policy so really that’s what I want to urge Committee and the FDA to think about, how are we going to mount that campaign to affect the people that are making the decisions, it doesn’t feel to me like HMRC can make those decisions so having a discussion with them is only going to lead to us all feeling even more demoralised.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Sarah. Absolutely agree with that funnily enough. Any more contributions from the floor? Thank you I’ll move straight to the vote then. All those in favour of the motion 44 can you show?

Thank you. And any against?

No thank you that’s clearly carried.

*Motion 44: Carried*

Just before I move on I’ll just say a quick welcome to Val Jeffrey and Ciaran Rohan who have joined us this morning our colleague from the AHCPS at least Ciaran was there – has he gone? Timed that well. Ok. Motion 45 please in the name of the North East do we have a mover please?

*Motion 45*

*45. That this AGM notes without surprise that HMRC continues to have difficulty recruiting specialists at ARC grades.*

*This AGM believes that this difficulty will continue for as long as pay levels within HMRC lag behind private sector equivalents, and that the issue will be exacerbated as experienced specialists leave for more lucrative private sector roles. This AGM is also concerned that HMRC's current reliance on trainee application levels as a benchmark for overall recruitment policy success is naïve.*

*This AGM therefore calls on Committee to continue to push for a pay settlement which reflects the skills and experience of ARC members and their professionalism in delivering for the nation.*

*North East Centre*

**Julie Blayney**

Morning, Julie Blayney North East Centre. Yep, we all know that pay is an issue, there are various examples of people struggling to recruit onto their teams be it lawyers accountants digital folk, tax specialists. Pretty sure everyone in this room knows of an issue. Sarah’s right, there is a cap. HMRC could be doing more to push against that, we could be doing more to push against that, and in a week when Vince Cable goes on Newsnight and states that HMRC has been underfunded for years and when we’ve been worldwide front page news if HMRC cannot push for more money for its staff now, when can it. Support the motion.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Julie. Any speakers to the motion? I’ll move straight to a vote then. Motion 45 in the name of the North East and I’ve misplaced my card, could those in favour can you please show please?

And any against?

No that’s clearly carried thank you.

*Motion 45: Carried*

Right the next three motions are slightly complicated they’re a kind of what [inaudible] Graham steer me if I do make a mess of it, the motions 46, 47 and 48 which have been taken in common debate from Procedure Sub-Committee report number two there’s a conflict between the motions. Motion 46 is being amended by their own Centre so it will be the amended motion that will be moved and that will be debated on the floor. If 46 passes as it’s amended then it doesn’t conflict with 47 or 48. Motions 47 and 48 will conflict in any event so when you move to the vote I’ll take the vote on motion 47 first, if that passes motion 40 automatically falls, if that doesn’t pass motion 48 moves to a vote and that stands on its own account to either pass or fall on its own merits. Did I get that right?

[Inaudible]

I probably need to say it again but there you go. So first of all can I have Legal & Governance, not Legal and General, Legal & Governance, to make motion 46 please thank you.

*Motion 46*

*46. (\*) This AGM continues to be concerned about the effect of low pay and less good terms and conditions on our ability to recruit and retain high quality staff. We fully support Committee in pushing for specialist pay for HMRC professionals. However, this AGM is concerned at the unfair and selective manner in which higher starting pay is currently being offered in some parts of the business, including Solicitor's Office. New entrants with less experience are entering on higher pay than existing staff whose experience is not rewarded. This is fundamentally unfair and is destructive for motivation and morale. AGM instructs Committee to seek equivalent rewards for existing staff.*

*Legal & Governance Centre*

**Helen Baird Parker**

Hello AGM, Helen Baird Parker Legal & Governance Centre. The amended version of this motion we’ve removed the sentence which was about pushing for specialist pay for HMRC professionals and the reason why we’ve amended that is because that wasn’t the main point of this motion and so so as not to conflict with what other people have said we’ve just dropped that, so this ought to read without the point about pushing for specialist pay. The main point of this motion is actually about the effect of low pay on all of us and on recruitment and retention in particular. It’s a real problem in Sols, it’s a real terrible problem actually and this month so far I’ve counted four of my colleagues who’ve gone out to the private sector including one of our directors, and we’re unable to recruit properly. I sit on the recruitment team for Sols in my day job and it’s not a secret we’re really struggling to recruit and our last round we made 19 offers only 11 people came and the reason that they gave us the people that didn’t come was because of the pay. Even though they knew at the outset what the pay was they obviously thought that there’d be more flexibility than there is in reality and they didn’t come. We’re doing another recruitment campaign now, we’re continually trying to recruit more people because we never get enough to backfill the spaces and we’re trying to grow we cannot grow because we can’t recruit enough people. The quality of the applications was generally quite low although we’ve managed to find some people. But then I hear when the senior people in our office started talking about this, somebody said to me last night oh ExCom were discussing all the great recruitment that you’re doing in Sols it’s going really well isn’t it and you’re getting lots of good people, and that just isn’t the truth. It’s not a secret that we cannot recruit properly but why is the top of our organisation either not aware of it or not discussing it properly or honestly. We need to admit that we’ve got a problem with recruitment and retention and that is because of low pay. The other issue is that we’re having higher starting pay offered and that’s unfair to our existing staff. We had higher starting pay in Sols for ages and ages, they have four points in the pay range that they’ll put people in on depending upon what experience they can show. They don’t have to show very much experience somebody like me would probably have got quite a few of the points except I wouldn’t have got that because I’m an existing member of staff and it’s not offered to me. So that’s unfair and it’s divisive. We should be I’m not against having higher pay I just want it to be awarded to people on a fair basis because we all deserve to have our experience rewarded don’t we. Not just people coming in from the private sector. So I think what we need is we need honesty we need to we all know around this room that there are problems with recruitment and retention and we need to bring that to bear in our work and get the top of our organisation to acknowledge this and to act on it. Thank you. Please support this motion.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Helen. Can I have a mover for motion 47 from Leicester please? Ashley

*Motion 47*

*47. (\*) That this AGM recognises the potential for additional payments for specialist skills or specific roles to be divisive and damaging for the future of all of HMRC's professions.*

*This AGM calls for ARC Committee to reject any proposals to move away from a pay system based on universal pay grades for all professions and to fight to ensure that jobs are graded correctly and that the pay for the grade is sufficient to attract workers.*

*Leicester Centre*

**Ashley Falla**

Here we go Ashley Falla Leicester Centre proposing motion 47 and therefore also asking that you vote against motion 48. Of course we all agree that all of our staff deserve more pay, I think that’s something we should all agree on. We share Committee’s frustration about the ever widening public and private sector pay gaps especially at the higher grades. We all do jobs that are difficult and important and we deserve recognition for this. We have a system in place which is designed to deal with this but it currently isn’t being used effectively. Last year Leicester Centre proposed a motion which was passed unanimously, if you are unaware of what that motion said it’s exactly the same as motion 47 that I’m proposing now. The only thing that’s changed since then is a growing sense of inequality. Our view is that Committee’s motion 48 seems to address the wrong problem. If the grading of jobs is correct and the pay scale usage is correct, the need for specialist pay falls away. We have a solution to the problem already, it just isn’t being used properly. Committee should be putting its energy into addressing the bigger pay scale and grading issue and not a small part of an overall package that is increasingly substandard. If you sort that out, the need for specialist pay disappears. There’s a real danger that the chance of specialist pay will sideline the bigger problem which is actually in the interests of all members and which take up valuable Committee time which could be better spent elsewhere. There are hosts of questions around this topic, not least the fact that as Helen was saying that it could raise issues of external recruits yet more being paid more than their internal counterparts with less experience and potentially not being as good at the job. Of course it will be explained as necessary for recruitment, but it’s almost impossible to compare those in terms of the quality of pay. The other practical issues that are raised are numerous, the biggest one of those is: who is special. Now I think that I’m special, I think we’re all special., so I’m special you’re special, I’m Spartacus you’re Spartacus, we’re all Spartacus we’re all special, well where does it start and where does it end? I had a think about current roles in the department and I apologise to those people who don’t work in the same areas as me, but there’s a realm of corporation tax specialists, as far as I’m aware it only exists in Large Business, so does that mean that when as soon as you come into Large Business you’re special because you’re a corporation tax specialist? Or do you need a set amount of experience, how much experience, and what level how do you measure it? And does that mean that someone doing corporation tax in Large Business than someone doing it in Midsized business who’s a CT caseworker not a CT specialist. Special’s not in the title but they’re doing the same work. What about staff dealing with evasion in ISBC, or the complicated work tackled by Counter Avoidance. These are people who don’t have specialist in the title of their job but we think they’re special. So perhaps you have to be more specialist than a corporation tax specialist, maybe an international tax specialist, a subset of corporation tax specialists. But then maybe they’re not special enough, maybe it has to be people undertaking transfer pricing work and not [?] work, or maybe it has to be widget transfer pricing and not financial transfer pricing. Or maybe you have to have been doing financial transfer pricing for two years have received a settlement of a million pounds in the last year, and be a Pisces – you know, we don’t know where it ends in terms of actually getting to be specialist. That’s obviously a ludicrous example from my own area of experience and I use the word experience deliberately rather than area of specialism. But I’m sure that these can be replicated in your own areas of the department. The easiest most transparent way to deal with this is not specialist pay, which creates the potential for more grey areas and more inequality; it’s using the existing structure properly which includes being able to progress through the scale in a reasonable time frame. I’m being red-lighted so I’ll move away but please support motion 47. Thank you.

 [Applause]

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Ashley. Thank you to move the motion 48 somebody on behalf of Committee.

*Motion 48*

*48. (\*) That this AGM is increasingly frustrated at the refusal of our employer to recognise the widening pay gap between HMRC professionals and their counterparts in the private sector, a gap which is more than 100% for some staff in London and as high as 80% in other parts of the country. This is unsustainable in the long term and business will suffer.*

*AGM notes Committee’s pay submission to Excom of January 2016 calling for action on the back of comments from John Manzoni and Matt Hancock relating to shortages of Specialist skills at senior grades in the civil service and pay arrangements to address that.*

*AGM instructs Committee to enter into discussions with HMRC to consider how such arrangements could be used to address recruitment and retention difficulties for skilled professionals in HMRC.*

*Committee*

**Vicky Johnson**

So Vicky Johnson Committee asking you to support motion 48 and consequently vote against 47. Can I make it absolutely clear, at no point does this motion say that we want specialist pay. Because actually we’re not sure if we do or we don’t because we simply don’t know enough about it and Ashley’s speculation that he’s just very carefully given us should explain to you why we simply don’t know what it is. But following the spending review of 2015 Matt Hancock and John Manzoni publicly recognised that there is a pay gap that exists between specialist roles in the Civil Service and specialist roles in the private sector. And they referred to plans that Cabinet Office were drawing up for new pay scales to help recruit and retain specialists. So at a time when HMRC is publicly winning avoidance tribunals, when our popularity is higher than it’s ever been although admittedly it’s still not very high, when we’re recruiting into E&C to continue our crusade against avoidance we would be a little bit silly, I used ‘bonkers’ on this page here but I’m not going to say that, silly, not to use the comments that have been made as a basis for a discussion and that’s all we want to do. We’re not going to get sidetracked into it we’re not going to let it take us away from the main point which is can we have proper progression, but we want to try and have discussions with the department about hey what would this look like. Would it be widget transfer pricing Ashley I don’t know. What might it look like, how might it work. What would it recognise what wouldn’t it recognise and even if at the end of those discussions we have to say no, this is to divisive, we’re not going to support specialist pay, we want to be able to have the discussions. So please support this motion to let us explore what it might look like as a way of getting us all some extra pay. Don’t tie our hands. Don’t make us have to say, sorry we can’t discuss specialist pay with you because we are actually specifically mandated not to. Please allow us an open mandate to talk to them about anything at all that might get us some more money. Please support motion 48.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Vicky. I’ll call for we’ll open up these motions for common debate. Graham?

**Graham Black**

 Graham Black yet again, Glasgow Centre asking you to support motions 46 and 48 and to not support 47. I thought that the speaker for motion 47 brought out all the intrinsic difficulties involved in this area absolutely brilliantly and I understand all the risks that are actually involved and what I know is, that Committee know all of those risks involved as well. There’s also the additional danger that we concentrate on tax when in fact we have a huge number of specialists in a number of areas around HMRC as well. And again I know from speaking to Committee members and I know from speaking to Vicky how aware we are of the risks involved in this. The reason I think we have to reject 47 and support 48 is just to make sure that we don’t tie the hands of our Committee members and our negotiators, let them discuss it, let them see if there are things that we can use in order to leverage the influence we actually have at the moment because of the public position on tax, let’s try and see if we can use that to leverage a wide and broad agreement that will actually benefit as broad a range of people within HMRC as possible. But they’ve got to recognise the fact and they do recognise the fact that it can’t be divisive. It is going to be difficult no-one says that is actually going to be possible but at least let them try, let’s see what we can do to actually take full advantage of what is actually an unusually good window for us to actually get something specific for HMRC it’s our unique selling point let’s try and us it. So please support 48 and 46, thank you.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Graham. Jeremy and then I’ll take Andy. Mike you want to speak?

**Jeremy Burrows**

Jeremy Burrows Legal & Governance, moving remission of motion 47. I cannot bring myself to vote against this. I cannot bring myself to say I want to reject the idea that we must have a consolidated coherent pay structure that recognises us all as one body. I cannot bring myself to reject a motion which is there to recognise that the government is playing divide and rule with us and that we are undermined if we allow ourselves to be divided. At the same time I see the strength in what Vicky and Graham have said about the importance of letting us at least talk and explore and see. There is a conflict between the motions we can’t pass 47 and 48 it’s one or the other, if they go forward. If we remit 47 we allow 48 to pass authorising Committee to explore it whilst at the same time holding on to the essential spirit of 47 which then needs to be borne in mind in those discussions and in Committee recommendation at the end of it as to whether the department is putting something on the table that we can or can’t live with, it has to be that we can or can’t live with it within the context of that spirit of 47. I therefore move remission of 47.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Jeremy. Ok colleagues this gets more and more complicated. So we now have a motion before AGM for remission of the motion. Now we have to debate the point of remission what that means is that the motion comes back to Committee neither passed nor falling, and Committee take on board the spirit of the motion. Can I ask for speakers on remission please now specifically. Ok I’ll take Will then I’ll take Andy.

**Will Richardson**

Jeremy’s clearly a greater nerd than I am but only just because he got here just before me. And I looked at 47 and I thought it was at first clumsily worded and my final view was that it had been extremely carefully worded, and the reason there are so many double and triple negatives in there urging Committee to stay away from proposals that go away from something else, was probably in order to leave a certain amount of wriggle room. My conclusion looking at the wording of the motion, is that it does leave enough wriggle room for Committee to take forward its spirit without being tied to every jot and tittle of the wording and I therefore support remission because it’s the best way out of what seems to me to be quit a difficult dilemma for us as a union.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Will. Andy? Speaking on remission.

**Andy Nixon**

Andy Nixon Glasgow Centre opposing remission. We got a one percent increase in our pay budget. If pay is going to some people it’s coming from someone else. We shouldn’t be doing it.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Andy. Gareth on [inaudible] please.

**Gareth Hills**

Gareth Hills from our Bristol Centre opposing remission. I hesitate to disagree with Will, but Will I disagree with you. I don’t see how Committee can take on the spirit of motion 47 and then pass motion 48 and have 47 back around the Committee table. There’s a conflict that conflict is pointed out it’s itemised it’s set out in detail in the Procedures Sub-Committee standing orders paper or report number two whatever it was, that conflict remains whether 47 is remitted or not, I don’t see how Committee can that for me that just creates a further problem to the one that Will has just identified. I think we’d be far better to have a debate on 47 let’s get the union’s position clarified and then we can move forward. Oppose remission please.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Gareth. Sarah?

**Sarah Guerra**

Sarah Guerra 100 Parliament Street. I agree with Gareth I think we should oppose remission think it’s a point of principle and we need to decide it, we can’t just fudge it. Either we want to explore specialist pay and see where that leads us, or we don’t. And we need to take that decision. I think passing it to Committee remitted actually ties their hands even more because what do they get to decide, and what do they get to explore. So as uncomfortable as it is we need to have the discussion and we need to decide.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Sarah. Any more speakers to remission? No. Then I’m going to move to a vote on the remission of motion 47.

Those in favour of remission please show.

And those against?

That motion is clearly not remitted. So we’ll move back to common debate now I think I’ll get Andy and Mike to speak in that. Have I missed anybody? Andy do you want to go and I’ll bring Mike in.

**Andy Nixon**

Andy Nixon Glasgow Centre supporting motions 46 and 47. I think I’ve already made my point when I was talking about remission. We can’t have money taken off some people to support others just to make the department’s recruitment slightly easier. That’s not what we’re about. So I would support 47 and that is as a CT planning specialist who’s got a fair chance of getting this if it was in place and as a member of Committee whose hands are going to be tied. Tie my hands please.

**Tony Wallace**

Just before I just one second Mike I can see a couple of people saying why did Andy speak twice, Andy’s entitled to speak twice because he spoke on remission, he’s now speaking to the substantive motion. Mike, sorry apologies.

**Mike Simmons**

Good morning I’m Spartacus, Leicester Centre speaking for motion 47 and therefore against motion 48. When I got promoted I was told I was going to become a research and development specialist. I was asked to train to do this and I thought I was special, and indeed I was told I was special because I was a specialist it told me in my job title. And after a while doing this I became even more special because I was the only person in the country dealing with scientific research organisations. Now it doesn’t matter what that is, but there was me or me dealing with this whatever happens. How much more special could I be than that if I’m the only person in the whole country doing something. After a couple of years I then became, because the department decided they needed to do something different, an international tax specialist. Does that make me more special? There may be a specialist international research and development specialist, I can get as many specials in these job titles as I need to to get this extra money. I did this for a couple of years and then due to some more reorganisation and frankly some truly mind-blowingly short sighted management decisions from people who should have known better, I was then asked to become a Business Learning Manager. For those who don’t know this means that I manage mentor train cajole criticise coach and hopefully inspire those on the four year graduate training programme so they get promoted to grade 7 at the end. Now my current job title does not say I’m special. However I can assure you that it’s not an easy job. And I can absolutely guarantee you that you couldn’t just come in from the outside world and be able to do that job it’s just not possible. So what would this have meant for me then? Oh I’m out of time already, brilliant. Would I have kept my special pay when I changed roles because I was told to? Who knows. What about the trainees who are looking to get promoted. Does that mean they all want to go in these special jobs? It doesn’t work, it’s divisive, it’s wrong vote against 47 sorry against 48 and for 47.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Mike. Paula?

**Paula Houghton**

Good morning Conference. Paula Houghton for Committee. Inevitably I’m standing up here to ask you to oppose 47. There’s more than one reason for this. You heard from Vicky, we put motion 48 together it is about more than specialist pay it is not purely about specialist pay. If we lose motion 48 we lose everything else that motion 48 talks about and not just the specialist pay bit. And we’ve also heard from several people how this sort of this motion hamstrings negotiators on the subject of specialist pay before we’ve even discussed it. Let me make something clear. ARC has never and will never push the department for an unfair pay settlement. That wouldn’t make us much of a trade union would it. We I also want to be clear that no discussions have taken place. We certainly haven’t discussed giving people specialist pay just because their job has special in the title. But what I’ll do is I’ll give you a couple of scenarios. Monday morning Vicky’s in her new office at Leake Street and the phone rings and it’s HMRC’s pay team and they say we’ve been thinking about this John Manzoni thing and we think that every grade 6 and 7 in our department is doing a specialist role by virtue of their seniority and we’d like to give every single grade 6 and 7 a pay supplement for being in a specialist role. At that point Vicky has to say no thank you because we passed motion 47 and we can’t discuss that with you and we can’t accept specialist pay because we’re mandated not to. That’s an extreme example at the other end of the scale from the one we heard from earlier. If that call to Vicky on Monday morning, ooh a minute and a half’s not long is it, was to say a pay supplement for a small number of people we couldn’t possibly discuss spreading that we couldn’t discuss widening that out to more people and the department could then enforce a specialist pay supplement to a tiny group of people and we couldn’t even argue against it because we wouldn’t be allowed to talk about specialist pay if this motion passes. We don’t want to make our pay system more unfair than it already is but please don’t cut off

**Tony Wallace**

Wind it up Paula

**Paula Houghton**

The possibility of even discussing ideas around specialist pay, please oppose 47.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Paula. Now in the interests of balance I allowed Mike a bit extra time and I allowed Paula a bit extra time I don’t have time to allow everybody that so we’ll be a bit stricter than that now. Will please.

**Will Richardson**

Also having a second bite of the cherry because I spoke on remission not on the substantive motions. Will Richardson Committee and London Euston Centre and with a very very heavy heart, and I apologise to Leicester, I would urge you to vote against motion 47 because it is much more specific and if you remove all of the double negatives what it says is we want universal Civil Service pay grades. I do think that there is a grave problem with refusing to talk to the department or the employer about any possible supplements when I was a trainee our President was cheered to the rafters for getting an extra supplement for what were then fully trained inspectors of taxes. It wasn’t offered to other professions in the department because the department didn’t appreciate the need to do so at the time but it is I think very important that we fundamentally follow the trade union principle that our job is to get money into people’s pockets and not to prevent money going into people’s pockets. I don’t think that either of the other two motions suggest for a moment that money is taken off some people in order to be given to others. What it is saying is that if the department perceives the need to pay extra for certain specialist skills then we shouldn’t push their face away and refuse to talk to them. So I would urge opposition to 47 and passing 46 and 48.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Will. Gareth?

**Gareth Hills**

Gareth Hills ARC Bristol Centre we discussed this in our Centre meeting I’d just like to clear up one aspect which I think is causing some confusion at the moment. If you look at ARC’s pay policy paper it’s made absolutely clear that the Treasury remit over the past couple of years it’s additional funds we’re talking about. It’s for having discussions about access to additional funds. Now yesterday colleagues we heard a fantastic presentation from Helen Baird Parker about the innovative work we’ve been doing at leading the FDA in equal pay. That innovation that approach to breaking that logjam of pay that we heard William Hague speak about the one percent figure that’s going to be there for the life of this parliament, that’s one innovative way. There are other ways we can do it and this is one of those ways. By exploring additional funds by getting the principle that we can do something then thinking how do we widen it out not just for tax specialists but across the twenty professions. I hear I hear exactly what Leicester are saying about grading and if we can go through JEGS exercise I’d say there be careful of the law of unintended consequences and even if it comes out as a grade 7 jobs are graded at grade 6, we’re still within the one percent pay envelope. So all the Committee want is the freedom to explore access to additional funds and I absolutely agree this time with Will Richardson, as a trade union we’re not about stopping money going into ARC members’ pockets. Give Committee the freedom to explore the possibility and widen it out as far as we can across all of ARC’s membership.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Gareth. Jeremy?

**Jeremy Burrows**

Jeremy Burrows Legal & Governance and currently Committee. There is a convention that Committee do not speak against Committee motions therefore with 46 minutes of my term remaining I hereby resign from Committee. I cannot bring it to bring myself to speak and vote against motion 47, I hear everything that has been said. But. We passed motion 45 I’ve spent 15 years on Committee watching pay negotiations that were supposed to be informed by pay comparability surveys that regularly showed how we were falling behind and the department said oh we will ignore that it doesn’t matter if there were a problem we’d have a recruitment and retention problem and we don’t. They continued to say that even after we clearly do. They clearly have no conception of the importance of treating their existing people fairly on pay if they can shaft us they will and my prediction to you all is that if you reject 47 if you explore and take specialist pay if you accept that poisoned pill you will find that all of the people being recruited from outside are recruited as specialists and paid more than you and you will not be called specialists and will be paid less. That is why with a heavy heart I say vote against Committee motion 48, the conflict arises because it has been drafted [inaudible]

**Tony Wallace**

[Inaudible] Jeremy

**Jeremy Burrows**

Too much at once, support 47.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Jeremy. I’m surprised you didn’t resign at the Committee meeting when we discussed it but never mind. Motion. I’ll call Sarah please to speak? Sarah?

[Inaudible]

**Sarah [?]**

I don’t think what I’m going to say makes much difference because as I read 47 I think we’re having an argument about something that doesn’t exist. I’m not sure that it ties Committee’s hands as much as as it seems to be claiming this whole thing about having to reject any discussions. What it says is we want a system based on universal pay grades. If discussions come up that add to that, I don’t think we’d have to turn that down as a discussion we’d have to explore it but I think we’ve got so far down the line of this polarised discussion that’s not going to make much difference here. But it feels to me like we’ve created a bit of an argument here that isn’t there isn’t as much conflict ion the two motions.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Sarah. Do we have any more speakers to the motions? There is a right of reply on motion 47 and 48 I don’t think there is on 46 because I don’t think there was any speaker against 46. So Ashley would you like to exercise your right of reply?

**Ashley Falla**

Ashley Falla Leicester Centre, unsurprisingly still supporting motion 47. I don’t think again I don’t think I’m going to say anything that hasn’t already been said I think the key message I think Sarah’s point there was a valid one and I agree with it to a certain extent I think what we have to say from a fundamental level is we need to be having these conversations about the fact that it’s all well and good saying oh we can get a bit more money for these other people but actually everyone in our membership deserves more for their jobs that they do and whether it is a case of HMRC has X amount of ability to change that or whether we need to go higher and go through the FDA AS Sarah suggested then that’s what we need to do but I think the spirit of the motion from 47 it’s clear that actually everyone for the jobs we do should get paid more and should get paid correctly and so I urge you to support 47.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Ashley. Vicky?

**Vicky Johnson**

Hello Vicky Johnson unsurprisingly asking you to reject 47 and vote for 58 48. 58 is my house number I’m sorry it just came out. I endorse what Paula says and I endorse what Gareth has said. I want to be able to talk about everything. I feel 47 puts a little bit of a constraint on me and my Committee I don’t want that constraint. I want to talk to HMRC about every single way possible to get more money into our pockets and that’s all we’re asking you to let us do. Motion 48 says please can we explore ways to retain ways to reward ways to get money into our members’ pockets. We will never agree a system that is divisive we’re not trying to do that we just want the freedom to talk about everything. Please support motion 48.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Vicky

**Vicky Johnson**

And reject 47.

**Tony Wallace**

Now. Motion 46 is quite straightforward I think so I’ll move motion 46 to the vote. Those in favour of motion 46 please show?

[inaudible]

The amended motion 46 thank you. I’m glad somebody’s awake. And any against?

That motion is clearly passed.

*Motion 46: Carried*

Sorry?

[inaudible]

I’ll move to motion 47. Now if motion 47 passes, motion 48 doesn’t go to the vote it automatically falls. So motion 47 those in favour please show.

And those against?

That motion is clearly lost.

*Motion 47: Lost*

So we’ll move to a debate on move to a vote on motion 48, those in favour of motion 48 please show.

And those against.

That motion is clearly carried.

*Motion 48: Carried*

Thank you very much for your time for that.

I think it might be oh

**Will Richardson**

Can I move suspension of standing orders Mr President, to ban any further use of the phrase ‘tie our hands’ [laughter]

**Tony Wallace**

You had me worried there for a second. I was about to punch you. [Laughter] With my hands tied behind my back.

Moving to motion 49 please in the name of the North East. Fran.

*Motion 49*

*49. That this AGM notes that the current pay structure for trainees does not recognise the development they go through on the course, other than a pay rise at the mid-point of their training to bring them in line with HO pay.*

*This AGM instructs Committee to include in its pay claim a proposal to structure trainee pay to include skills and experience payments at key milestones in the training course to reflect the rapid developments made.*

*North East Centre*

**Frances Clapham**

Frances Clapham North East Centre asking you to support this motion. I actually presented this exact same motion last year and I’m a 2012 trainee. Since last year and since I presented this motion last year I have sat and passed three exams I’m currently working full time in the business as a grade 7 I’m still being paid £15,000 less than my colleagues who are substantive grade 7s. So clearly this is mental so please support the motion.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you. Any speakers to the motion? Helen?

**Helen Baird Parker**

Helen Baird Parker Legal & Governance Centre speaking in support of the motion and I think it wouldn’t be AGM if I didn’t get up and say please remember legal trainees who get paid a lot less than band Ts. They’re not on band T they paid less than the band O so we need to think about them too.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you. Any other speakers to the motion? No I’ll put it to the vote. Those in favour of motion 49 please show?

And any against?

That’s clearly carried thank you.

*Motion 49: Carried*

Calling motion 50 in the name of the West Midlands.

*Motion 50*

*50. That this AGM notes with the changes to the TSP programme HMRC should recognise and reward trainees as they pass two key milestones. Firstly at the point they stream secondly at the start of the newly extended consolidation period.*

*At present the mid-point pay rise is not guaranteed for new entrants and if given is paid several months after they have completed stage 1 of the programme and been streamed.*

*Streamed trainees will undertake grade 7 work within their line of business with no further formal study programme but will have no increase in pay commensurate with the increased complexity and quantity of work undertaken.*

*Furthermore, should a trainee leave the TSP programme at any time following completion of stage 1 of the programme, it is expected that they would be paid at SO level; above the pay of their peers who remain on the course.*

*This AGM instructs Committee to negotiate with HMRC with a view to obtaining pay arrangements for Band T members that reflect the level and complexity of work they are undertaking at the various stages of the programme. This should focus on the move from formal study programmes to full time office-based consolidation and align with, at least, the minimum of the SO pay band.*

*West Midlands Centre*

**Mike Burgess**

Hello Mike Burgess West Midlands Centre. There’s essentially two parts to this motion, it’s kind of set out fairly well in what’s written down, but basically on the course the TPDP TSP course as it currently stands, at the from the midpoint onwards you’re either streamed or we were basically doing a lot of grade 7 work and similar to sort of the last motion there’s the part of this that we think that the trainees need to be rewarded for the substantive increase in the complexity of the work they’re doing. There’s also an issue in the way we’re paid that after that midpoint if you drop off the course you’re guaranteed a position at SO level where you’d actually be paid more than the trainees that are still on the course which is blatantly unfair so please support the motion.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you. Any speakers to motion 50? No I’ll move straight to the vote then. Those in favour of motion 50 please show?

And any against?

No that’s clearly carried. Thank you.

*Motion 50: Carried*

**Vicky Johnson**

So I’m going to take the chair just for a minute I may not give it back.

**Tony Wallace**

I might not want it back.

**Vicky Johnson**

Introducing Tony please to make his President’s remarks.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you.

#

# Tony Wallace, ARC President

Well good morning colleagues and it gives me tremendous pleasure to deliver my second annual report as the President of ARC, my second and final annual report to tell you a bit about the work the union’s done over the past year and to hand over the role of ARC President to my successor Vicky in about 35 minutes time.

Recent years have been a real challenge for the trade union movement and ARC has not been excepted from that. And the situation frankly doesn’t look like it’s going to change any day soon. The public sector continues to bear the heavy lifting of deficit reduction, HMRC’s locations strategy about which we’ve heard a lot this morning with the first round of one-to-ones done has resulted in ARC members being offered exit terms and people facing longer more costly and inconvenient journeys to work when we can get there at all. Civil Service reform marches on and we’re facing yet another attack on our compensation arrangements just five years after agreeing a settlement which was fair to the public servant and fair to the taxpayer alike.

We Civil Servants have never shrinked or shirked a challenge and we deliver the best Civil Service in the world, but the pay freeze and the ongoing cap has meant a real and tangible drop in our living standards. At the same time over half of us work more than six hours beyond our contracted hours every week and those extra hours every single one of them mean that we hand back thousands of pounds every year to our employer as a further and invisible contribution to meeting the cost of governments through our own pockets. Colleagues I’d be fooling nobody if I was to suggest that the working lives of our members have improved dramatically in recent years and some of you are frankly going to be faced with some really difficult decisions in the years to come. And against that background the temptation is to become downhearted but that would be a mistake. The truth is that its’ at times like these when we’re under pressure that we really need our union and our members really need our union. It’s only through hard work and organisation that we can support our members effectively. Colleagues, old fashioned we might sound in words of win-win [inaudible] Mr Hills, and senior stakeholders, but some old maxims still have currency and educate agitate organise still works for me. Difficult our work may be but do that work we will. We’re a national union representing our members wherever in the country they may be. That picture of representation will become all the more important as HMRC develops its model of Regional Centres. I do want to talk about a bit our location strategy, William Hague spoke about it earlier and we need to have a policy around that and we have got a policy around that. This is the biggest single issue we face and it will be the main focus of this Committee, apologies Vicky, of Vicky’s Committee over the next two years. It’s the single most important thing we do is to protect the jobs and the livelihoods of our members, it ranks above everything else and it’s our core purpose and we will do everything in our power and I mean everything in our power to do that. And if as it may well happen we can’t do it, then in those circumstances we will work to ensure that we get the best terms that we possibly can for those of our members who unfortunately do have to leave the organisation, and don’t be under any illusions that’s quite likely to happen. I can’t pretend that it’s not because it already has. On the day of the one-to-one announcements virtually every person in Norwich, and you have colleagues in Norwich, were offered voluntary exit [inaudible]. Neither can I pretend that our members in places like Norwich have not experienced grave concern over their futures or frankly the help that ARC can give them. I’ve been to Norwich I have really heard what it feels like for people who aren’t going to be working any more. Those were the most difficult meetings I‘ve spent probably in my entire time as a trade union leader. A man who had been around that Centre for years and years and years said to me, I’ve never needed my union before, never in twenty years, but by God I need it now and I expect my union to work on my behalf and I promised that I would and I’ll tell you what, we did and we got him what he was looking for.

I’m proud of that, I’m desperately proud of that I’m proud of what we did for members in Norwich and we will do the same for our members wherever they are around the country. But how did we do it? We did it by helping those members who wanted to stay to organise their evidence to be the [inaudible] case and allow them to move to the Regional Centre if that’s what they wanted to do. For those members who were leaving the organisation we went to HMRC and got them to reverse palpably bad decisions bordering on the illegal over the money that was being offered to exit this organisation. In some cases we improved the offer made to our members by up to thirteen thousand pounds that was the difference, and it’s not just Norwich where we’re doing that. When we got the incorrect message about RDT in London reversed we’ve secured daily travel assistance for some of our London members for another two years and I know the problems about DTA and we’re working on that as well, but don’t make any mistakes we got that turned back. Then there’s the trainees who have asked to move to places that have not yet even been built. Our intervention, Amy’s intervention made sure that those trainees can stay where they are until there’s a better more coordinated approach to what their career map will look like and can be set out. We made sure that there’s not a one-size-fits-all approach to one-to-ones, that the decisions that are made must be evidence based and reached collaboratively. Google maps might indicate what a virtual journey looks like but that doesn’t replicate an assessment made on what the actual journey feels like to the person who’s obliged to make it.

We’re offering people help with appeals and we’re highlighting problems with some of the correspondence being issue on the back of those one-to-one discussions. Our input is having incorrect decisions reversed and the one-to-one improvement being process being improved. Through the action of our reps and through the help we’ve given individuals we have got some real and tangible results for the people who pay for us all to be in this room here to be.

But we need to do more than that. We need to build the capacity in our organisation to make sure that our members on the ground can be engaged directly with those discussions that impact on their working lives. Excuse me a second. Drink [inaudible] me makes thirsty work.

We’ve got reps in each of the thirteen regional implementation groups around the country and we’re engaging with local members to feed various issues into the meetings but we’re going to have to ask local Centres to take that work forward on behalf of local members we went through this in York and Yorkshire was a fantastic example of this sort of stuff. Why do we need to do that? Because I could no more tell you what the world looks like from a Hull perspective from an office just south of the river Thames in Leak Street than can a member of star chamber sitting in 100 Parliament Street but I’ll tell you what, I know 16 members in Hull who can, and we need that capacity allow those people to feed into those conversations. We’re making sure that we’re working with HMRC to make sure there’s a joined up strategy I business locations so that as business is growing in one place it doesn’t simultaneously leave another area unviable. But HMRC has to grasp more fully what TW3 can deliver for a fresh thinking organisation and the people that can work within it and I heard William this morning and I’ve had this conversation with William more times than Sally and with colleagues in the organisation. We’ve invested heavily in Surface Pros and Blackberrys, we can locate any piece of post on any machine at any location across whatever size the United Kingdom is, any place at all. We have a highly educated and professional cadre of staff and with that kind of technology we can do our work literally anywhere and do it effectively. Our message is a really simple one. Technology is a brilliant tool but it’s nothing without the people. End the bricks and mortar thinking and use the digital technology that HMRC’s invested in to attain the brainpower in this organisation that allows the human beings who actually deliver your business, not the machines, to actually deliver your business.

Colleagues we had an absolutely brilliant debate on pay this morning, thank you Ashley that was one of the best contributions I’ve heard at any time in this AGM and I sincerely mean that. I sincerely mean that. Committee will act on your instructions but it is worth just setting out a wee bit of a contact context around this. We aren’t suggesting that we go back to job weighting groups. We know how horrible JWGs were they were awful. They lasted about two years, Committee at that time opposed them, we know where the dangers are in that. Neither did we say that we want a fragmented and an obtuse pay system, that’s the last thing we want. But that the RTS and we heard it again this morning, unless we start thinking about ways to break the deadlock then there is nothing absolutely nothing on the table beyond the paltry one percent shared between us all over the next four years. There have been no discussions about what pay flexibility might look like, it’s not even on the table but when you hear the Chief Executive of the Civil Service and the Minister for the Cabinet Office tell Parliament that they cannot recruit the specialist skills they need to run the Civil Service then surely we should be looking for a way to lever those comments for the benefit of our members. Far too often, labour market supplements and [inaudible] starting pay is used to attract people from the private sector. A two tier pay system that rewards private sector experience and ignores public sector experience is developing and we must do something to put money into the hands of our members. What I can absolutely assure AGM is that if, and at the moment it is a very big if, HMRC approach us to discuss pay flexibility we would come back to the members on this for a decision, the decision will lie with you and if that means going to a formal ballot then we’ll look at a formal ballot, we won’t be taking that decision in isolation. But I’m glad that we’ve allowed to at least have that conversation.

I do want to just thank Helen again on equal pay stuff now I know this has been a theme throughout the last two days, Her work genuinely has been tireless to pursue our members’ equal pay cases. Terry Cook despite his retirement truly was tremendous when we went to the employment tribunal I mentioned it last night and I’ll mention it again today. Terry and I did appear together and the feeling was without a doubt that we came out of that hearing very very well, we can’t prejudge the judgement it would be disastrous to do that, but the feeling was that the judge was very sympathetic to what we were saying. But let’s be honest whichever way it goes it’s going to appeal there’s no doubt about it we know that, we know that from our counsel. It might be us or it might be HMRC but it’s going to go to appeal. So this is going to run.

 [? ] tax Is as high in the political and public agenda as I have ever seen it. I was called on Friday morning to comment on the Panama cases and for the first time I didn’t even speak to the press people involved I asked our press colleagues in FDA to say he’s not going to talk to you. Because I can’t risk as a serving Civil Service say anything at all about eleven and a half million pieces of paper that I’ve not seen or documents I’ve not seen on a day when there’s press speculation about the Prime Minister. That is not going to go away. That clamour for transparency and fairness grows ever louder but there remains a level of confusion and misinformation in the minds of the public over what are our members doing which is just not helpful. We act at all times at all times within the legal framework that’s set for us by Parliament and sometimes the result of that application of the law is other than that which the public and some politicians think that it ought to be. But one thing is absolutely for sure, without an appropriately resourced HMRC and a cadre of properly rewarded senior professionals, the headlines would be a whole lot worse. Ian Campbell continues to take a lead in that area of external relations and he does a tremendous job. We never go anywhere without telling people that we need resources for the organisation and hey we should be better paid. In the event we had last summer we had Vanessa Houlder the FT tax correspondent chairing a meeting on tax myths and how they prevent us from making a better tax policy. The panel included Helen Baird Parker and it included me along with the Financial Secretary to the Treasury David Gauke, his Labour shadow Rob Marris, and representatives from the Low Income Tax Reform Group, the CBI, accountants Masons and Action Aid, and it was us that organised that. MPs, politicians, academics, lawyers, tax professionals, NGOs, business representatives and Civil Servants crowded in to the room in Parliament, it was standing room only and we made sure that that discussion included the need to address the pay gap at ARC grades.

So that’s it. We’ve now reached the closing chapter of ARC’s 2014-16 Committee so it’s technically a goodbye from us all. It’ been extremely hard work over the past two years at a time when the pressure of people’s day jobs becomes ever greater and we’re able to find the time to work on behalf of members shrinks. The good news is that just as an old chapter closes, a new one opens. In 20 minutes or so a new President Vicky Johnson will inherit the seat I’m currently keeping warm, Vicky is a long standing and highly respected ARC activist and will do an excellent job in leading this union over the next two years and in this a year of firsts Vicky’s deputy is Paula Houghton, also an excellent ARC activist for many years and we have two female presidents a woman president and deputy and a top team. That’s a great message. For far too long ARC Committee has been dominated by and I’m going to say it Sarah, male pale and stale men. It’s time that we had a change and that change is starting to happen. They are a formidable team and they have a terrific cadre of officers and a fresh new Committee behind them.

I started by saying it’s easy to be a trade unionist in the good years. It’s much more difficult and infinitely more important to be so in the lean years. My two years as president and the two years before as Gareth’s deputy have been the most challenging I can remember all my years as a trade unionist. I’m delighted and lucky to have had a Committee so willing and able to share the work with me and to have enjoyed the support of you our members. I wish Vicky, Paula and the team all the very best, I’ll be remaining on the Committee in a back bench capacity to give them all the help and support that I can, so for almost the last time as ARC President, thank you all very much for your help and your support. Thank you.

[Applause]

# Training

**Tony Wallace**

Ok thank you. We move now to motion 51 in the name of Leicester please.

*Motion 51*

*51. That this AGM encourages ARC Committee to build capability within ARC Committee to ensure that ARC representatives have access to learning and development opportunities to enable them to develop skills to represent ARC members to best effect - either through Civil Service Learning or other training providers.*

*Leicester Centre*

**Mike Simmons**

Mike Simmons Leicester Centre moving motion 51. For those with some form of memory from the previous two maybe three AGMs this looks remarkably similar to motions you’ll have seen before. Committee has a difficult job to do and we don’t underestimate the effort that is put in. This motion is merely to allow Committee to get whatever training it thinks it needs to do the job to the best of its ability, please support the motion.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Mike. Do we have any speakers to the motion? Graham?

**Graham Flew**

Graham Flew Committee. Is it groundhog day Mike? This motion was indeed on the order papers last year and the year before. Two years I followed Mike to the rostrum and opposed the motion. Last year I followed Mike to the rostrum and supported the motion. I’m standing here to support the motion. Not least that it’s from Leicester and I think they deserve it today. [Laughter].

**[Unidentified]**

Sympathy vote?

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Graham. You’re not going to get this [inaudible}. Ok are there any other speakers to the motion, I’ll move it to the vote then. Please all those in favour of motion 51?

Any against?

That is carried then. So you did give it Mike.

*Motion 51: Carried*

Moving to motion 52 please name of Glasgow. Andy.

*Motion 52*

*52. In the last few years HMRC has invested heavily in 'sheep dip' leadership training events that are poorly designed for large parts of their target audience. This AGM instructs Committee to emphasise to HMRC senior leadership that they need to trust their senior leaders to agree with their managers on what training is appropriate for each individual and to attend only what is needed. This would free up both time and resources to allow staff to do the job the government and taxpaying public expect of them.*

*Glasgow Centre*

**Andy Nixon**

Andy Nixon Glasgow Centre I’ve actually got quite a long speech here but in deference to the later motions and the timetabling I’ll keep it short. There’s actually a Civil Service blog dated 10th February by a John Stafford of Civil Service Learning which sets out the principles for good learning. It should actually change what people do it should be easy for people to take up be a good use of time and money and should teach the right things. I’m not saying that sheep-dip training isn’t easy to do, everyone’s got to di it and as long as you’ve got T&S to get there it’s relatively easy. But for the rest it’s got to be pitched at a level for the people who are least experienced, it makes it more difficult [inaudible] to provide good value for people who are more experienced. By allowing us to agree with our managers what actual training is of worth to us we can HMRC can demonstrate trust in its staff its senior staff, reduce its costs and free up time for delivering what the government and the general public want us to do. I’ll stop at that.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Andy. Any speakers to the motion? Sarah?

**Sarah Guerra**

Hello Sarah Guerra London 100 Parliament Street Centre. I’m sorry Andy didn’t articulate a bit more about what the motion means because reading it I feel I need to ask for remission. I work in HR I’m head of engagement and culture, the engagement survey gives us lots and lots of feedback on the qualities of leadership and what it’s felt like to be in the department. The department’s made a massive investment in the leadership academy. I read this as some of that being about the that being us being forced to do some of those courses. Some of those have been not well targeted, some of those need improving. But we still need to accept that there are improvements that needed to make and sometimes in a department of this size and scale that we have you need to direct that from the Centre, you cannot rely on individuals accepting that they need that training and choosing to do it. Also we as a union have campaigned for certain things to be mandatory. We’ve successfully introduced unconscious bias training which everybody is supposed to do, so it could be read that we don’t want those things. I think the spirit of this motion is about ensuring actually what the department’s learning management strategy is supposed to be that we take personal responsibility for our learning and do the right things. But in a department of our size you can’t always guarantee that’s going to happen and so I’d like Committee to take this motion and take the spirit of it but on the wording it would be awkward I think.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Sarah. Speakers to remission please. Jeremy?

**Jeremy Burrows**

Jeremy Burrows Legal & Governance, opposing remission, all it asks Committee to do is emphasise something to HMRC senior managers, I don’t see what difference it makes whether we pass it or remit it so why waste the time with the vote, we’ve got several more motions to get through therefore I oppose remission and once the remission vote has been taken move that the vote now be taken.

**Tony Wallace**

Graham? Speaking to remission?

**Graham Flew**

Strangely , I agree with Jeremy. Oppose remission support the motion.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you. Gareth? Remission?

**Gareth Hills**

Gareth Hills ARC Bristol Centre I agree with everything Sarah said, we’re leaders in this room, if we think there’s something wrong with the training let’s go back and have a discussion with our managers but as Sarah said we also have a collective sort of view that we need to express sometimes so that’s why I think remission is right for this motion., it’s right that we shouldn’t be seen to be rejecting leadership academy roles Sarah’s right we’ve asked for investment in any number of training events do we want to roll all that back? I think it’s better to remit the motion and for Committee to take it on in the spirit that it is. Please support remission.

**Tony Wallace**

Ok. Any more speakers to remission? Ok I’m going to move to a vote on remission. Those in favour of remission please show.

And any against?

Ooh that’s close actually. Ok we need the tellers

[Unidentified]

Andy and Amy

**Tony Wallace**

Andy and Amy yes. You can

[inaudible]

you can no hold on no it’s ok it’s how it works so you can count and you still have the right to vote on it so. So yes you can. Ok. Where’s Amy? Oh you’re here. Ok you’ll probably have to go and wander up. So rows

**[Unidentified]**

You can stand up first Amy.

**Tony Wallace**

So those in favour of remission please show.

[Inaudible] [Laughter]

In favour of remission.

And those against remission please show.

[Inaudible] [laughter]

Those against please show again.

Ok I think we’ve that’s ok yeah, that’s good then that’s fine. Thirty one for and thirty two against, and we got the same figures. So remission has fallen on that motion so we move back to the substantive debate on motion 52. It was all going so well. Any other speakers to the substantive motion 52 any more speakers to the motion itself. Ok I can’t recall if there was any I don’t think there was any opposition to it there was just the call to remission wasn’t there, so there’s no right of reply so I’ll move to the vote then, those in favour of motion 52 please show?

And those against?

That is clearly carried. Thank you.

*Motion 52: Carried*

# Other matters

**Tony Wallace**

Ok moving now to the final block of motions we’ve got about ten minutes to go, motion 53 please in the name of West Midlands.

*Motion 53*

*53. That this AGM acknowledges the plans for the creation of Regional Centres in HMRC and directs that ARC creates a structure of membership centres which reflects that change. The merger and/or creation of new centres to be completed by 31 March 2018.*

*West Midlands Centre*

**Duncan Gleig**

Duncan Gleig West Midlands region with a bit of a throat from last night. We’ve heard a lot today about transformation, transformation of the department, transformation of the buildings, transformation of the way we do our work, this motion is about transformation of the union to match that.

So in the absence of anything else to say, here’s a quote: our association has adapted as its use of organisation the district council. Consisting of the members of a group of districts known as a Centre. There are in all 25 Centres with a membership ranging from 12 to 437. Throughout the history of the association much thought has been given to the problem of the ideal constitution. Any question of association rules could always be counted on to provide matter for heated debate. Well I don’t think there’s a heated debate here this is obvious. We need to match what the department is doing in the way it’s changing its organisation and as a union we want to do that as well. We’ve put a time limit in this for Committee to do this by, that’s their stretch to get that done in that time limit. So I just want to offer one further piece of advice for Committee when they’re looking at this and it’s taken from the same document, this is the Quarterly Record of July 1941, I think Will Richardson was editor [laughter].

**[unidentified]**

Senior editor.

**Duncan Gleig**

And the final piece of advice is this. In a district council the bright ideas and the sharp criticism of youth and new blood are available together with the greater experience and riper judgement of senior colleagues. Although sometimes the rules are reversed. Please support the motion.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you. Any speakers to motion 53 Mike? Sorry Mike I think I should call Loz and Steve first. I’ll take Loz and then Steve and apologies.

**Loz Hutton**

Loz Hutton from Committee proposing remission of this motion. Appreciate the sentiment and we will have to review our Centre structure as Building Our Future goes along and an office is closed. As things stand at the minute BOF is going on well beyond the date that’s proposed in this motion and a lot of our smaller Centres will still exist beyond 2018. All of our Centres are going to play an important part in how Building Our Future pans out. We need the Centre structure as it is at the moment to feed into the regional implementation groups and all those discussion on BOF. So yes we will have to review our Centre structure and we will do that and we may look at different ways of how that looks. But we don’t need to do it by 2018. So please support remission.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Loz. Call for remission so it’s a debate on the remission point now. Any speakers on the remission? Helen yep sorry. We’ll get you in a minute. You’ll get this Steve.

**Helen Baker**

Hello Helen Baker. I’m, a supporter for remission of this, I’m from a very small Centre in Gloucester we have three members here today from a Centre of ten so and there’s a lot of Centres that couldn’t send anybody. We are due to close but I would urge you to remit this motion so that we in Gloucester can continue until we close, thank you.

**Tony Wallace**

Thanks Helen.

[Applause]

**Steve Dodd**

Steve Dodd from Leeds Centre. I was going to support the motion but listening to what Loz says I support remission. It is an important motion but what I would not like to see is that we can from Committee we can take our time I think that date of the life of Committee to come up with new structures and proposed new structures is the right sense of pace. You can’t wait till the end. So what’s right for Gloucester may not be right for Leeds. So I think a throroughgoing review of how we organise, we’ve done it in the past, we’ve tried to keep ahead of the game, remission but taking on board the sense of urgency that West Midlands has said, I think is the right course. I think the union is in good hands all the debate we’ve had today from new people shows that you’ve got the capacity to do that. It should not be a Committee vote this exercise in my view, it should be those people who have spoken here, those who are active within the union, to do that and this is not my first AGM [inaudible] but it is my last, goodbye and thank you very much

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Steve

[applause]

**Gareth Hills**

Just very quickly Gareth Hills supporting remission. Duncan said there’s not going to be a heated debate, think that’s maybe right all there should be is a debate. There should be a debate amongst our members and FDA were looking at an organising strategy that we hope to roll out across every constituency section and branch of the wider union. A part of that is about engaging with our membership that’s how you build healthy vibrant branches Centres for us, and consulting with our members over the future structure of Centres gives us an organising opportunity gives us a chance to engage with members. So for that reason I’d ask you to support remission.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you. Colleagues we only have four motions to go in about five six minutes I’d like to get through them all. Mike did you want to speak on remission? Helen on remission? No. I’ll put it to the vote on remission then. Those in favour of remission please show.

And those against?

That motion is remitted thank you Steve will take on board the stuff about the pace you’re quite right on that.

*Motion 53: Remitted*

Moving to motion 54 please in the name of the North East.

*Motion 54*

*54. That this AGM notes with disappointment HMRC's continued insistence on the operation of a performance management system which is demotivating, divisive and unfair. It is also concerned that managers - many of whom are ARC members - spend a significant amount of time complying with the procedural requirements of the PMR system, when this time could be better spent leading and motivating their staff.*

*This AGM instructs Committee to request from HMRC a formal analysis of the aggregate time spent by managers and staff complying with the PMR system, so that a comparison may be made between time spent on this activity and on the core activities of HMRC's business.*

*North East Centre*

**Spencer Munn**

Hello. Spencer Munn North east Centre. The prerequisite PMR motion it’s the first and only one I think of this conference. Everyone knows PMR it’s about asking Committee to take affirmative action with HMRC to quantify the time spent by managers and staff so that we can have proper data to assess what we’re doing with it and its impact on our business. Please support the motion

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you. Any speakers to the motion? No I’ll move straight to the vote then. Please those in favour of motion 54 please show.

And any against?

That’s clearly carried.

*Motion 54: Carried*

Motion 55 in the name of Liverpool please?

*Motion 55*

*55. That this AGM instructs Committee to seek commitments from HMRC to co-ordinate the roll-out of tablets in a manner that ensures business continuity and does not disadvantage hot-deskers.*

*Liverpool Centre*

**Paul Hodge**

Paul Hodge from Liverpool TSP and it’s my first AGM [cheering]. Just [inaudible] quickly on this, it’s not about hot desking or anything like that it’s simply when you replace a desktop with a docking station someone hotdesking can’t use it so we want Committee to seek a commitment that they take that into account and try and look at whether they can do the teams that have more hotdeskers or things like that first rather than simply which team seems to need the docking the tablets first just to take into account of those who are hotdesking.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you. Any speakers to motion 55? I’ll move straight to the vote those in favour of motion 55 please show?

And those against?

Clearly carried.

*Motion 55: Carried*

Motion 56 please in the name of Leicester. Ashley.

[inaudible] At pace.

*Motion 56*

*56. That this AGM instructs ARC to obtain from the employer statistics regarding the retention of former trainees at the five and ten year points following successful completion of their respective fast-stream and uses this to engage the employer on a joint initiative to make HMRC an organisation that recruits AND retains its senior tax professionals.*

*Leicester Centre*

**Ashley Falla**

Ashley Falla Leicester Centre hoping for a quick win to help myself get over the crushing defeat of 47 [laughter]. A metric that’s often used by the employer is to say that the number of applicants that we have for fast stream development programmes and the number of people who take up roles on completion of those programmes, suggests that we are able to attract and retain workers. We don’t think that that’s a reasonable metric we think a better one is to say how many former trainees are still in those roles or higher after five or ten years so we ask ARC to investigate and find these stats on how many people are still in roles after those times so we can actually have a full and frank discussion on how we make HMRC an employer that does effectively attract and retain its workers thank you.

**Tony Wallace**

Excellent Ashley thank you very much. Any speakers to the motion? No? I shall move to the vote. Those in favour please show?

And any against?

That’s clearly passed carried thank you very much.

*Motion 56: Carried*

Final motion of the day 57 Jeremy Legal & Governance.

[Inaudible] Ok move on.

*Motion 57*

*57. This AGM stresses the need for high quality administrative support to enable ARC members to carry out their roles efficiently and effectively. It is a false economy to tie up professional staff dealing with routine admin when this work could and should be more effectively carried out by skilled administrative support. All ARC members are having to do more with less, and carrying out routine admin eats into the time available to carry out their other duties. It is a false economy not to provide skilled administrative support. AGM instructs Committee to push for the provision of high quality administrative support.*

*Legal & Governance Centre*

**Jeremy Burrows**

Jeremy Burrows Legal & Governance. And so we come to the last motion of the AGM with four minutes to go. It’s particularly appropriate that I should move this since this is probably my last ARC AGM. If my plans come to fruition the next AGM will be just a matter of days before I leave HMRC on early retirement so I don’t expect to be a Centre representative. As I look round the hall I see nothing but friends. In fifteen years on the Committee [inaudible] [laughter] I’m very short sighted. In fifteen years on Committee I’ve stood at the rostrum at AGM many times, kicked it a few times too. You haven’t always agreed with me, that’s as it should be. It wouldn’t have been miuch of a debate if you had. But the debate has always been a thoughtful debate conducted in a spirit of respectful comradeship, I think that’s wonderful what makes this union so great will continue to make it great

**Tony Wallace**

[inaudible} move to the substantive point please

**Jeremy Burrows**

All that remains is to demonstrate that lawyers can be brief. This motion is self explanatory it does exactly what it says on the tin, and I formally move it.

**Tony Wallace**

Thank you Jeremy. I’ll move to the vote, all those in favour of the motion 57 please show?

And any against?

That’s clearly carried thank you.

# President’s closing remarks

**Tony Wallace**

Colleagues I am not going to take up your time, I’ve spoken for long enough today, that concludes the business and we managed to get it all done I’m absolutely delighted at that. Thank you all very much for your time and for your patience and over to Vicky.

**Vicky Johnson**

Not so fast Mr Wallace. You knew this was going to happen, somebody has to stand up and say Tony you’re not president any more [laughter] and it might be me. It’s a thank you. So there’s just a couple of quick thankyous to Loz and Dave for organising, the Procedures Sub-Committee for doing all the work on the motions, but the big thankyou goes to Tony please, because he’s done two years as president and when he took over we were in dispute with our employer, we’re not in dispute with the employer any more you’ve had William Hague talk about what a good relationship we have now going forward, and that is down to Tony and his Committee and the hard work that he’s put in so that’s one big success that Tony’s had, supported by the FDA at the back there yes. His other big success has just happened recently with Norwich he’s spoken about it but he did actually manage to get one of the payments increased by £13,000 because he challenged the department’s calculations he told them they were in danger of having an age discrimination case taken against them and they went back and they looked at it and they came back and they did it the best way they possibly could under the constraints of the £95,000 cap and that’s Tony’s success and he should be applauded for that. But we should applaud him really because he’s done two years in what I believe is quite a stressful role or he’s now told me, after I agreed to take it on, and he’s done a really really good job so Tony thank you very much, I feel as if you’ve put us in a relaly good position we’ve got two very challenging years in front of us, five very challenging years ten very challenging years in front of us, but I do feel that you’ve prepared us and the new Committee well to take it forward. Thank you very much.

[Applause]

**Tony Wallace**

Conference is closed. Thank you very much everybody and I mean it sincerely. Bye bye then.