

*Here is the full text of the email I wrote to the MG immediately after this meeting. Please note that it was sent just before 4am!*

**Date: Mon, 29 Jun 2009 03:51:25 +0100**

Dear Donna, Rosalind, Wendy, Michael, and Alex

At the moment this email is addressed to those of you who attended the re-scheduled management group meeting last Friday. I reserve the right to forward it with further comments to Rebecca, Henu, and Nancy, who were not present. It seems that Fiona was a mistake so I will take her off the list.

I called Donna over the weekend to find out what you had achieved at the meeting after I left, and was told that you spent the whole time discussing Woody's and my behaviour - oh dear.

I then called Woody to convey this to him and to clarify what it was he was trying to say when he was continuously being interrupted, which happened four times, and which led to his loss of control.

He told me that he was trying to point out that no distinction is being made between the system account, the admin account, and the cafe account (no 562) so therefore no sensible figures can be presented to the management group about expenditure under budget headings. This is a bit technical for some of you, but if you look via Exchanges at View All Trades in a Specified Time Period you be able to see what he is talking about.

I have asked Donna to look into why these errors are being made in the office and report back to me.

It seems that we are having major problems due to a confusion about expectations. Woody's proposal to go online was endorsed at the AGM in February 2008.

The management group took a whole year to get its act together to carry out the necessary preconditions for this to happen and finally we managed to achieve it just in time for the AGM in February 2009. Four months later we are still having problems with the management group failing to cooperate with this exercise. Please try to understand that we have been mandated by the AGM to complete this project, and we have been trying to work on it through the management group. This project is vital for the development of NLETS. Other things have to be done in the meantime, like organising the June social, but basically there is nothing more important to NLETS than this.

It is almost beyond belief that Woody and myself are confronted by a group of adults displaying behaviour more reminiscent of adolescent rebellion, by refusing to allow us to speak, when we try to pursue issues such as (i) how the system is being used to assist the MG to budget pledges, (ii) how we may encourage members to access their accounts, and (iii) how we can use the system to help members network with others close to them.

Yes, Woody lost his temper, but a Michele who was a guest at the meeting was(also) so dismayed she walked out. I had already explained to Alex I needed my items to be discussed as early as possible so I could get some work done when I got back and be up early to leave the house at 6am, and in the end I could not stay any longer - I imagine Rosalind had to leave soon after. So it looks as if more than a third of those present judged that the meeting was a waste of time.

Alex was meant to have consulted everybody about the agenda beforehand but that did not happen and she was working from scribbled notes that nobody else had access to. Nevertheless everybody was bending over backwards trying to tolerate her lack of experience and failure to grasp the pertinent issues, but there was no tolerance of the frustration caused to others by her inability to manage the meeting.

This also casts light on Wendy's behaviour in acting outside the management group in trying to pursue her own objective of networking locally. I gave her a hard time about it, but she had made her own decision that the management group was not worth involving in the initiative.

I drafted a report of the meeting which we had in lieu of the committee meeting on 17th June, which was rather noisy, but enabled us to make a lot of progress in unravelling the issues which had been raised - mostly because we dropped the usual format of meetings in favour of proper discussion – but instead of those present either endorsing or suggesting amendments to my text, I heard nothing, then Donna did her own version - where does that leave my report? Am I supposed to ditch it?

You could try and minute this meeting but since no substantive items were addressed the meeting it may as well have not taken place. Either way, it becomes clear that the management group, as it is presently constituted, is not able to help us to complete the online project, and we risk arriving at another AGM having been thwarted in achieving our objectives with it.

There are several ways to address this situation.

**First:** If you persist, as a group, in pursuing Woody about what happened, he may raise a grievance, and I will take up that grievance on his behalf, if necessary to Trustees of LETSlink UK. However, who wants to spend time on that?

**Second:** Another option is that we call an Extra Ordinary General Meeting - it only needs four of us to request and you then give 21 days notice. At this meeting I would give a full report of what has taken place, so a great deal of stuff people don't want to hear about may come out, and we have an election. Anyone who thinks this is a good idea, let me know.

**Third:** Yet another option is that Woody and I take whatever measures are needed to pursue the online project so that we can achieve success before the next AGM. This means providing individual coaching, sending messages out, restructuring the management group, ie developing sub-committees, and so on, so that NLLETS can begin to function more effectively.

I understand that the way you all behaved at the management group arises out of just thinking it was business as usual and trying to absorb us and control us - and the only thing I'm sorry about is that we over-estimated your ability to rise to the occasion. However, we are not reporting to you, we are reporting to the members as a whole. You can still hold meetings to discuss arranging socials and the like, and also provide a collective response from you on any issues that arise.

However, I shouldn't think you need to worry about Woody appearing in one of your meetings again, he really does have better things to do

...M