

Left Unity Executive Committee Minutes

11th July 2015 – Birmingham

Attendance: Kate H, Brigitte L, Dave T, Felicity D, Pete G, Doug T, Matthew C, Oliver N, Guy H, Bianca T, Len A, Terry C, Simon H, Sharon McC,

Apologies: Tom W, Andrew B, Siobhan D, Kathy L, Salman S, Eve T, Steve M

Chairs: Bianca and Doug **Minutes:** Terry

It was agreed that minutes should be set out in a way that make them comprehensible to those not present – so to include resolutions etc either integrated into text or as appendices.

1. **National Council follow up.**

- a) Constitution commission referred back to EC – no takers for convenor so refer back to NC and report.
- b) Oct 10 day school – Eric Toussaint is confirmed – booked at Teatro Technic – **Pete/Fred** to produce material for circulation to branches and members as soon as possible.
- c) TUSC letter – Kate and Terry are meeting with Clive on Monday. Len reported that he has been approached by TUSC in Wales but are not agreeing to meet at this time until Left U Wales has decided a position on whether they want joint slate for Assembly elections 2016. Doug reported from London committee – which endorsed decision of aggregate not to have a joint slate.
- d) Election schools to be discussed at August EC.
- e) Branch organisers' school – **Simon and Bianca** to work on proposals.
- f) **Terry** to progress standing elections committee with Len and Scotland – and write something for branch newsletter.
- g) **Felicity** to prepare discussion on EU for NC in September.
- h) Longer discussion on finances in August – **Andrew** to be asked to provide some notes on the overall shape of our finances in advance of the meeting.
Agreed to remind people that direct debits are much less labour-intensive for us to process while at the same time recognizing not everyone can do this. **Simon** to put in newsletter.
- i) Meeting re Scottish and Wales politics - **Len** to discuss with Scottish comrades. Matthew C raised question of Scottish Left Project meeting in August – agreed to consider sending people to meeting – **Matthew** to provide details (*Simon and Sharon possibly to attend subject to dates and availability*).
Agreed **Simon** to discuss with Scottish Committee re any material they propose to put out at conference.
- j) Disputes Committee are progressing as requested and will meet on July 31st.
- k) Autumn political event working with Brick Lane Debates and others is now likely to be spring.
- l) Terry to progress Safe Spaces event and ensure that all views are consulted and hopefully involved.
- m) Feedback from June 20 was excellent. Agreed to investigate production of austerity kills badges.

- n) Preconference timetable. - SOC unhappy with timetable agreed by NC which has anyway not been notified to branches and members.
Agreed to move conference to 21 22 November and add 2 weeks to deadline for motion and 2 weeks more for SOC work. There will also be a priorities ballot which **Tom** will carry out. **Terry** to liaise with SOC.
- o) EC on Oct 3 to be in Manchester before demo at Tory party conference.
- p) Move NC to 7th Nov in London.

2. **The Government Budget:**

Pete and Sharon introduced on the budget and its campaigning implications

Agreed:

- **Sharon, Terry and Tom** to work on a leaflet explaining the impact of the budget as per Sharon's introduction
- **Kate** to work on a paper on campaigning strategy (Simon and Bianca volunteered to assist with draft) and **Guy** on narrative to be discussed and agreed by EC members by email.
- To organize an LU event during Tory Party conference on the impact of Tory policies on women and children. Not to clash with CND event. **Terry and Brigitte** to work on this.

3. **Greece:**

Felicity and Kate introduced discussion.

Agreed:

- **Simon and Pete** to get Ozlem Onaran to write something for the website on to comment on the preliminary report of the audit commission (see: <http://cadtm.org/Preliminary-Report-of-the-Truth> }
- **Pete/Olly** to write something on international finance
- **Simon** to put something out to branches re affiliating to GSC, organising collections, holding meetings on Greece (and considering whether its useful/viable to set up local GSCs if there are others interested being involved) , advertising medical aid etc
- To consider funding if NC members wanted to attend CADTM summer school but couldn't afford to fund themselves <http://cadtm.org/CADTM-Summer-School>

4. **Corbyn campaign:**

Kate introduced followed by discussion

5. **Trade Unions/Right to Strike campaign:**

Simon and Olly reported

Motion on right to strike agreed (Simon to circulate)

Discussion on what's going on in regions to come to NC as previously agreed.

6. **European Left Party (ELP):**

Kate reported back from meetings last Friday 2nd July which seemed to go well. Will probably take up to 18 months for full decision on our observer status as it has to finally be endorsed by full Congress but may be able to start participating in some meetings before that.

Kate to write something for newsletter and website explaining more about ELP

7. Youth and Students:

Kate reported on terms of reference from the Youth and Student group which have been changed from previous draft to be in line with our constitution. (Appendix A)
Doug proposed that we did not have an option to amend terms of reference ourselves – had to accept them or refer back.
This procedure was agreed.
The terms of reference were then agreed.

8. Report from Disabled Members' caucus:

Terry reported on discussion in caucus to put forward a motion to conference on assisted living not assisted dying and press release that has already been issued. Caucus statement will be put on the website to generate discussion before the pre-conference period and branches are asked to consider discussing – maybe invite speakers from caucus.

9. AOB

Agreed to issue a press statement opposing Fox hunting

Appendix A

Left Unity Youth and Students Terms of Reference:

The purpose of Left Unity Youth and Students is to raise political demands around issues relating to students and young people, in order to defend our interests within, and shape the policies of, the party. This is the Youth Caucus and Student Section collectively known as LUYS.

1. Membership

a) Left Unity Youth and Students (LUYS) is open to all members of Left Unity aged 30 and younger, and all those in full-time or part-time education.

b) Members should work within their LUYS groups, either at their university, school or college or locality, depending on what exists in their area. Members of the Caucus and Section should work in their Left Unity branch.

2. Structure

a) The basic unit of organisation within LUYS is the local off-campus/university/college/school group. These groups are responsible for undertaking the day to day work of LUYS. They have autonomy within their sphere of responsibility and should be self-sustaining and constantly striving to take initiatives, within the framework of Left Unity's policies and constitution.

b) Conference is the highest decision making body of LUYS. It is the only body able to change LUYS policies and terms of reference. Conference is to be held every year.

c) LUYS Executive must give at least one month's notice of the date and location of conference to the membership of LUYS when calling it. Conference elects the Executive which acts as the national leadership of LUYS between conferences. The Executive should aim to meet on a bi-monthly basis.

d) Executive meetings are open to all LUYS members and minutes of those meetings will be made available to all members. Between conferences an Emergency National Meeting can be called by either the Executive or one third of the total membership of LUYS. The Executive can be held accountable and is recallable by these Emergency National Meetings.

e) LUYS shall elect one Student Representative and one Youth Representative to the National Council at each annual conference, one of whom must not be a full time student and at least one of whom must be a woman.

3. Democracy

a) Within LUYS all decisions are taken by a simple majority vote of all members present at the relevant meeting or committee.

b) Minorities have the right – and the duty – to fight for their different points of view. They must have the possibility of becoming the majority: they are encouraged to publish their critical viewpoints in LUYS's publications and openly fight for their views.

c) Groups of comrades have the right to support alternative positions and form themselves into temporary or permanent tendencies.

d) The Executive Committee should seek to as far as possible reflect the racial, gender and sexual diversity of the caucus.