

Left Unity National Council Meeting
Saturday 13th December 2014
12-5pm
Mary Ward Centre, 42 Queen Square, WC1N 3AQ

Agenda

1. Minutes and Matters Arising and EC decisions for ratification
2. General Election Campaign
3. National Conference Follow Up:
 - a) Constitution (UK)
 - b) EC composition
 - c) Scheduling and process for remaining items
4. Disputes Committee Reports
5. Appeals Committee Report
6. Spring event proposals
7. Scotland sub-committee report

8. Motions to NC:

a) Birmingham

b) Waltham Forest

c) Lambeth

d) Yorkshire and Humberside

e) Matthew Caygill

e) LGBTQ caucus

9. Staffing report

10. Correspondence Inc. South Mediterranean Forum

Italicised and underlined items were deferred to next meeting

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Attendance: Felicity D, Pete G, Kate H, Chris H, Tom W, Oliver N, Andrew B, Toby A, Matthew C, Gioia C, Jon D, Stephen H, Guy H, Yassamine M, Pete McL, Joana R, Barbara S, Pip T, Drew M (Eastern), Mike S (East Mids), Liz S (East Mids), Simon H (London), Fred LeP (London), Kathy L (London), Terry S (London), Dave S (London), Eve T (London), Louise C (London), Matthew J (Scotland), Anna B (South East), Anna F (LGBTQ caucus), Susan P (Women's caucus)

Observers: Tony A (Lewisham and Greenwich), Joseph H (Disputes Committee), Annie T (Disputes Committee)

Apologies: Salman S, Micheline M, Terry C, Kerry A, Merry C, Liz D, Sharon McM, Doug T, Roisin B, Bev K, Darren McC

Chairs: Eve T and Fred LeP

Minutes: Felicity D

Agreed alteration to the order of business to take items 7 before 6

Noted that while branches can place motions on the agenda, NC members may propose items for the agenda. It was agreed to accept the motion proposed by Matthew Caygill onto the agenda.

Agreed to accept late submitted motion from Gioia C.

1. Minutes of the National Council 20th Sept 2014: agreed

Matters arising:

- The TTIP motion from Manchester needed action; agreed a leaflet would be produced and Lambeth would be included in discussions.
- Motion 2 from Northampton: Sam had been appointed and the matter would be discussed in his report
- Motion 4 from Southwark on NHS: reported that there had been a good meeting at the Southwark branch with film show; film is now embedded in our website
- The NHS 999 are calling a major convention. It was agreed we would be part of this Agreed to work with all NHS campaigners. Sam and Terry Stewart to participate. Andrew to coordinate the work and to go to the next meeting for LU but it also will be notified to the branches for branches to be represented.

Decisions of the EC for ratification: there were no EC decisions that required ratification. Agreed to additionally include EC minutes in NC papers in future, even though EC minutes are already circulated to NC members.

2. General election campaign:

- Chris H reported that the paperwork to allow 'Left Unity - Trade Unionists and Socialists' to be on the ballot paper was in place
- The document on the number of candidates was discussed: Hackney has a candidate; Brighton might stand; Exeter intends to stand but not yet chosen a candidate; Lambeth would like to stand; Bristol has a candidate; other areas are still considering it

Key points in a long discussion

Endorsement of candidate rests with Chris H as authorised by NC

Kate H reported that in discussions with the Greens which she had been delegated to hold the Bristol seat we are thinking of contesting was identified as their number 2 target seat.

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Matthew C stated that we need an election strategy for where we are not standing. There was considerable discussion around working with the Greens, branch autonomy, and election strategy.

Oliver N moved that: we endorse the decision of the Bristol Branch to stand a candidate in the general election and endorse SW as candidate. However we request that the branch chooses a different constituency (agreed 16-11)

Felicity D moved that: The NC endorse candidates proposed other than Bristol

The NC applauds the initiative but requests that the Bristol Branch

A Canvasses to test the feeling in the area

B Meet with one or more of the national officers

C Share with the officers the reasons why they wish to stand in that particular constituency

(Agreed 17-4)

Both resolutions were carried; Chris H and Oliver N to meet with Bristol branch

Election Fundraising

Pete McL announced that £500 was available to support a joint candidacy with TUSC and anyone who had genuinely been a member of Socialist Alliance

Andrew moved a revised fundraising target in the new year of £25,000: Agreed. Simon H, Oliver N and Terry S agreed to form a sub-committee to raise the money.

Manifesto: the draft manifesto from the sub-committee was discussed, together with Tom W's introduction and Dave S's alternative. The draft manifesto was accepted with the following additions: For Women's Reproductive rights; Opposition to gender stereotypes is included; Inclusion of the word children; Environment section to be enhanced and support for the million climate jobs be endorsed; Support for abolition of the Monarchy, abolition of the House of Lords and support for votes at 16

Dave S withdrew his alternative introduction

Draft Manifesto was agreed unanimously

Agreed a copy to go to the branches for feedback on additional points if they were already conference policy

3. National Conference Follow Up

a) **Constitution (UK):** referred to additional NC in New Year

b) **Composition of EC:**

Pete G moved an amendment on rotating elements in EC composition. Agreed we support the idea of a fixed membership EC; Agreed this be implemented after new NC and officers elections completed by end of March. Carried with 6 against and 2 abstentions.

c) **Scheduling and process for remaining items:** Kate H suggested that an additional NC be called to cover some of the follow up from conference plus finalised manifesto: Agreed.

Next meetings: January 17th EC in Birmingham; late Jan/early Feb: additional NC; February 14th EC; March 14th NC

4. Disputes Committee Reports

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The Disputes Committee detailed reports with recommendations modified to current circumstances were discussed and accepted. This included the endorsement of the new united Nottinghamshire branch (name to be determined) as required under the constitution.

- Members present were asked to respect the privacy of the individuals when reporting back from this meeting on social media
- It was noted that conference had agreed that referral to Disputes should, in the absence of a regional committee, be through the NC. A small group of the NC should deal with this, separate from the disputes and appeals.

5. The Appeals Committee report: was noted. It was agreed that when the NC group is established it will look at the implications of the two reports put before the NC.

6. Scotland sub-committee report

- Jon D introduced the report. Matthew J responded. After discussion the recommendation of an aggregate of all members in Scotland early in the New Year was agreed.

7. Correspondence inc. South Mediterranean Forum

- Agreed we participate to further our opposition to Drowning as Border control with Felicity D and another comrade/s to go. Budget £ 500 agreed.

8. AOB

- **Raise the Roof for Housing** conference March 7th; short report was circulated and agreed. All branches to be asked to appoint someone to work on developing this conference, which was an item from our first policy conference.
- **Agreed** that in future meeting branch resolutions would be given some priority and that a timed agenda be agreed.
- **Agreed** support for London Black Revs campaign of support for those arrested at the Westfield shopping centre for the "I can't breathe" protest
- Child abuse/White Balloons meeting on January 14th at House of Commons. **Agreed:** We need people to attend; details to follow.