

## Minutes of the Executive Committee 26th July 2014

**Attendance:** Felicity D, Salman S, Bianca T, Merry Cross, Tom W, Kate H, Jade H, Pip T, Guy H, Anna F, Kat B, Chris H, Mike S, Bev K, Andrew B, Gioia C, Tim N, Joana R, Barbara S, Simon H (minutes)

### 1. Remit of the Executive Committee

Kate H introduced a discussion on the remit of the EC in relation to the NC based on the constitutional descriptions of each.

Branches send resolutions to the NC not the EC. If branches want items or issues to be heard then the NC is the proper first port of call.

NC members may be observers at the EC and should notify the Nat Sec if they are attending. According to the constitution EC has remit to pass policy in emergencies though it must be ratified urgently by the NC and is accountable to the NC for all its decisions. Was agreed that only emergency resolutions would be heard at the EC as the proper place for political resolutions is the NC.

Agreed for a sub group to be committed to write standing orders for the EC. Group to consist of Kate H, Felicity D and Bianca T.

### 2. Political context

Kate H introduced on general political context. Tim N reported on trade unions, including the forthcoming 30 September coordinated strikes. Felicity D submitted a statement to the EC on the recent exposure of sexual abuse by men in the Tory party.

General discussion followed which discussed the recent news that the economy was out of recession, the developments in the Labour party and the ongoing problems of the rising cost of living and stagnant wages, in particular the growing housing bubble in London.

Tim N proposed an amendment to the statement on Tory sex abuse deleting references to "powerful men"

Amendment was defeated 5 in favour, 10 against and 2 abstentions.

Statement was passed unamended as follows with only one abstention:

“Our children require a life free from abuse. Raising them should be a joy, their care, our privilege and our society’s responsibility.

Today, childhood is challenged by services damaged by austerity, child poverty, ruination of mental health services, denial of free NHS care to all babies, overt sexualisation and heightened exposure to pornography. Handing our schools to academies outside of local democratic control intensifies risks to children.

Increasing inequality, impoverishment of services and casualization in key workforces leaves children vulnerable to abuse by powerful men. Services for children should be fully funded.

Those working with children should be well trained, qualified, paid and regulated.

Abuse of children happens in many situations. As the grotesque picture of abuse by powerful men unfolds, we believe for justice to be served:

- All survivors must have fully funded legal support and resources to engage with counsellors and researchers
- Non-establishment organisations, including trade unions, should be funded to research the issues and the dark history of protection for the rich men who raped children in care
- Security Service files must be available to the enquiries
- The wealthy and powerful should have no hiding place in this investigation.

Children today must not have similar tales to tell because we left them undefended.”

### 3. Autumn campaigns

Discussed a range of campaigns in the autumn and priorities for Left Unity. Dates are in the calendar section at the end of the minutes.

Agreed to give the ecosocialism conference £ 100 and to support the Wigan Diggers festival. Agreed to organise a branch organisers’ day school on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> October.

Agreed to organise a national meeting for public sector trade unionists (unfortunately clashes with Wigan festival but no other date was possible)

Agreed to establish a team to coordinate our intervention into the TUC demo on 18th October. Bianca, Tim, Tom, Andrew, Kate and Simon

Agreed to advertise and mobilise for the Frackfree demonstration outside the Labour party conference in Manchester on 21st September.

### 4. Summer priorities

"999 call for the NHS" Jarrow march in late August early September  
Bianca introduced.

There will be a banner specifically made for the march - Kate H to organise.

Leaflet for the march will be produced by Tom W.

Branches are encouraged to attend their local part of the march (Terry will communicate with relevant branches and general details will go out in the newsletter).

Details of the route are online <http://999callforhhs.org.uk/detailed-map-route/4583636068>

London Region should organise a "welcome committee" for the 6th September when the march arrives into London.

EC agreed a £250 donation to the organisers of the march.

#### *Anti-Nato protest*

Week of protests in Newport, Wales against the NATO summit from 30 August to 5 September.

Wales Left Unity is producing a leaflet. There is a protest march on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> August - Left Unity members are encouraged to attend (details will go out in the newsletter)

#### *Gaza protests*

Simon H proposed an emergency resolution on the situation in Gaza because we have not yet agreed a policy on Palestine.

"Left Unity demands an immediate end to the air campaign and invasion of Gaza by Israel.

Left Unity calls for the immediate end to the siege of Gaza by Israel.

Left Unity calls for the end of the occupation of Palestine by Israel."

Passed unanimously by the EC.

#### *Scotland meeting*

Felicity D raised the issue of the Republican Tendency for a Yes Vote in Left Unity's public rally on 6th September in London which is in favour of a yes vote in the up coming Scottish referendum. Constitutionally the tendency has the right to organise such a rally as long as it doesn't suggest that it is a Left Unity meeting. The EC had no position on the meeting because the position of the recent policy conference was no support either way for a yes or a no vote.

This does not prevent individual members of Left Unity attending or speaking at the conference as long as it is clear they are not speaking on behalf of the party.

### **5. Follow up on NC decisions**

Went through the minutes of the NC.

- a. Online branch - Tom, Merry and Kate to discuss procedure on how to organise the online branch.

Will report to the next EC.

- b. Podemos speakers tour with Ken Loach - Kate H is organising, will probably be in October.
- c. Candidates who stood in the elections agreed to write reports but so far none have done so. Terry C will be asked to chase up.
- d. Chris H is organising the elections sub committee
- e. Tom W is organising the manifesto sub committee
- f. Transferring from Standing Orders to Direct Debit system is underway - Tom is organising.
- g. Social Media worker - Guy H reported that everything is set up but the discussion on its finances needs to go back to the NC.
- h. Unofficial Left Unity discussion group on Facebook - Bianca to contact Peter M who organises it.

### **6. Conference Planning**

Kate H introduced. The NC agreed a one day policy conference on 15<sup>th</sup> November in London. The remaining commission documents and areas of policy to discuss are

- a. International issues
- b. Education
- c. Environment
- d. Crime
- e. Safe Spaces document
- f. DC standing orders

Proposed deadlines for the conference documents (commission papers and related branch motions) are

October 9th deadline for resolutions and policy documents.

October 13th sent out to branches

October 30th all amendments and composites to be submitted

November 10th all conference materials on website

November 15th Conference

EC agreed proposed timetable and Kate to send proposals to the Standing Orders Committee

#### **7. Disputes committee reports**

Agreed Kate H to respond to Disputes Committee over question of safer spaces policy. EC supports request for confidentiality for DC processes and urges party members to cooperate with the process.

Agreed that the DC standing orders will be on the November conference agenda

Agreed to support DC proposal for a meeting in Glasgow to resolve the dispute there, to be attended by Disputes Committee, some EC members and members involved in both sides of the dispute.

Agreed to ask NC to give consideration to strengthening party policy on the basis on which members should be allocated to branches.

Leeds dispute is ongoing, Felicity and Kate are responsible for taking that forward.

Manchester dispute: agreed to refer to NC to consider implications where party members refuse individually or collectively to comply with DC and party processes.

#### **8. Next meeting of the EC**

Next meeting will be held on the 23rd August in London from 12 to 5pm. Venue TBA.