**Minutes South West Central Labour Party Branch Meeting on Tuesday 19 March 2019**

1. Attendance: Pól O Ceallaigh (chair), Tonya Kocharova, Felicity Leary, Emma Turnbull, Ed Pope, Liz Peretz, Ruth Shallard, Richard Shallard, Anne Lyons, Stephen Marks, Bill MacKeith, Richard Howlett, Jane Caplan, Alex Donnelly, Roger Howe, Joanna Gill, Wendy Martin, Alex Toal, Rosemary Preston, Colin Cook

Apologies: Pat and Gordon Kennedy, Bob Price, Sobia Afridi, John Tanner, Alex Hollingsworth, Susan Brown, Peter Leary, Susana Pressel, Sue Tanner

1. Minutes and matters arising: Minutes were agreed. Liz Peretz reported still waiting for appeal of Stansted 15 to come through and the campaign continues. The motion on the standing orders went to the AMM and was adopted.
2. Discussion: Local party member Jane Caplan, a historian specialising in Nazi Germany, and an emeritus Fellow at St Antony’s, led a discussion on ‘Fascism and populism: what can we learn from history?’
3. Alex Toal, the organiser of the Campaign for an Oxford Musicians’ Minimum Wage, spoke about the campaign.
4. Motions
5. Campaign for an Oxford Musicians’ Minimum Wage

This is a motion in support of the campaign by Oxford University students for an Oxford Musicians’ Minimum Wage.

This is a campaign which demands that Oxford University colleges and affiliated organisations pay a minimum wage to musicians who are commissioned to perform at balls and other events. The campaign draws attention to the reality that there is currently no minimum wage for musicians, as most musicians are self-employed and have to negotiate fees for each performance while commonly incurring costs relating to travel and equipment. This issue is particularly relevant in Oxford, where the University and colleges are responsible for many events and where many organisations are in a position to pay a reasonable fee, but instead often students are engaged to perform for very little or no fee at all. There is no legal protection, and progress in this respect therefore has to be achieved by social and political pressure on powerful organisations.

This Branch therefore notes that the rates proposed are in line with the Oxford living wage and therefore resolves to:

* Officially endorse and extend this campaign;
* Send this motion to the All-Members Meeting with a view to it receiving official endorsement from the AMM; and
* If approved by the AMM, send this motion to Anneliese Dodds to ask whether she will endorse this campaign as the MP for Oxford East.

The motion was proposed by Tonya Kocharova and formally seconded by Colin Cook. The motion was amended and was carried.

1. Climate Change – A Green New Deal for Oxford

This meeting notes:

- The welcome declaration of a Climate Emergency in January by Oxford City Council, the plans for a “Citizens Assembly” on the issue plus growing popular support for strong action, not least demonstrated by the recent Student Strikes’;

-The latest reports by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) indicate that, in order to avoid runaway, catastrophic climate change there must be even more significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions than previously thought. Many cities, for example Bristol, are aiming to be zero carbon by 2030.

-Achieving these targets is possible but means transforming our energy system, which in turn calls for an economic mobilisation on a scale with what occurred during WWII.

-As proved true in the aftermath of WWII, a large-scale economic mobilisation can help reverse a dangerous trend towards extreme wealth concentration. Indeed, the effort needed to tackle climate change provides an historic opportunity to create secure and high-wage jobs, to raise productivity for a vibrant and diversified economy, to democratise ownership of our national economy, and thereby to counter systemic inequalities. Nationally the Labour Party is exploring these policies under the heading of a ‘Green New Deal’.

-When it comes to tackling climate change, Oxford City Council is a leader amongst local authorities. It set up and supports the Low Carbon Hub; has installed solar panels on council buildings; supports car-sharing schemes as well as greater cycling infrastructure and is leading the way on electric vehicles through its Zero Emission Zone plans.

This meeting calls on

a) the leaders of labour groups in the City and County Councils to actively pursue the action plan set out below, and

b) the new EC Policy officer to work to speed up the local and national labour responses to the climate emergency through all available channels

This meeting also calls upon Oxford City Council to:

-Set a target for Oxford to be zero carbon by 2030 and call on Oxfordshire County Council and national government to adopt a parallel commitment;

-Ensure the institutional structures and procedures needed to achieve this target, including:

1. Establishing a Climate Change Panel under the auspices of the Scrutiny Committee which will scrutinise the council’s policies and actions to make sure they take into account the climate change impact of everything we do;
2. Including an evaluation of climate change implications in all reports to council committees
3. Making tackling climate change a priority in key planning documents, including the Oxfordshire Vision 2050, the Local Plan, the Growth Plan etc.
4. Establishing a Climate Change Forum, along similar lines to the City Conversation on homelessness, which convenes regular strategy and coordination meetings with key stakeholders from across Oxford, including representatives from Council, trades’ unions, local anchor institutions, community groups, campaigns, business, and the like.
5. Engage with Oxford’s population at large to raise awareness of the climate emergency facing us and to increase active engagement of all in reaching the 2030 zero carbon emission target.

The motion was proposed by Liz Peretz and seconded by Joanna Gill. The motion was amended and carried unanimously.

The meeting voted to prioritise sending the Climate Change motion to the All Members Meeting.

Going forward the Secretary would circulate agenda and motions one week before meetings, so please send any motions for circulation eight days in advance of the next branch meeting. Branch meetings are held on the third Tuesday of the month.

1. Reports from Councillors

Emma Turnbull reported that the public meeting on education was very well attended, and followed by some positive coverage in the Oxford Mail. Shortage of secondary places, currently offering advice to parents on this. Making submission to PSPO consultation on opening up Cornmarket to cyclists. Oxfordshire plan 2050 is available online.

Colin Cook reported city councillors have a grant of £1500 for use in local ward for socio-economic benefit and £2.5k infrastructure funding and encourages people to apply. Jericho boatyard – it looks as though owners are attempting to put in yet another application. Local plan continues in its process. Flood alleviation will go to a public enquiry because of compulsory purchase of land that local land owners have objected to. Seacourt park and ride will be expanded once the flood alleviation scheme has been carried out.

Richard Howlett reported that he is now City Council cooperatives champion. Currently working out what scrutiny committee should be looking at.

1. Other reports

- Branch Membership Secretary – Anne Lyons is waiting for access to membership list from central office.

1. Concerns of members

Bill MacKeith raised issue of PET scanners. Several MPs on board with campaign.

Ed Pope – boat at Castle Mill Stream currently under threat of eviction by Network Rail. Press officer from Oxford City Council links serious anti-social behaviour to installation of new sites. Richard Howlett will raise this as a matter of concern.

1. Future meetings: Cllr Tom Hayes – Public Space Protection Orders, and Stephen Marks on new role of Policy Officer at next meeting. Tonya Kocharova – on Mental Capacity Bill. Liz Peretz – discussion on education. Bill MacKeith – Green New Deal – Chris Saltmarsh. Ed Pope – anti-Semitism.
2. Other events:

Oxford and District Labour Party and Oxford Young Labour meeting on Green New Deal at 7.30pm 28th March at Oxford Town Hall.

Thursday 4th April – lobby at meeting at County Hall of Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

1. **Date of the next meeting 7.30pm Tuesday 16 April, Oxford Town Hall**