**OXFORD & DISTRICT LABOUR PARTY**

Secretary

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**To: Members of the Oxford & District Labour Party**

You are invited to a meeting of the Oxford & District Labour Party on **Thursday 10 May 2018** at the **Wesley Memorial Methodist Church, New Inn Hall Street, Oxford, OX1 2DH.** Many buses run to the city centre; the nearest car parks are at Worcester Street (OX1 2BQ) and Gloucester Green (OX1 2BN). Please arrive from 7:15 p.m. so the meeting can start promptly at 7:30 p.m.

NB there will be a run-off vote on Oxford East’s fourth nomination for the national policy forum as there was insufficient time at the AGM. Oxford East general committee delegates will be mailed separately with details, but are asked to arrive early as the ballot will close at 8 p.m.

All members are welcome to attend, speak and vote on all policy issues including resolutions. I hope to see you there.

Ann Black

Secretary

**AGENDA**

*7:15* 1. National policy forum nomination. Ballot papers will be distributed to Oxford East delegates who will choose between Dan Dobson and Tom Hayes for the fourth nomination after a tie at the AGM. The ballot will close at 8 p.m.

*7:30* 2. Attendance, apologies and welcome

*7:32* 3. Agreement of agenda and timings

*7:33* 4. Minutes of the all-member meeting on 9 February 2018, attached, and matters arising. The motions on Brexit, Afrin and rough sleeping have been posted on the policy forum website at

<https://policyforum.labour.org.uk/commissions/international/brexit-and-the-customs-union>

<https://policyforum.labour.org.uk/commissions/international/afrin>

<https://policyforum.labour.org.uk/commissions/housing-transport/rough-sleeping>

and the motion on Haringey was sent to the general secretary for the attention of the NEC.

*7:35* 5. AGM, 9 March 2018. The minutes will be formally agreed at the 2019 AGM, and are attached for information. NB Helen Evans has stepped down as joint women’s officer for personal reasons, and Shaista Aziz is sole women’s officer. The motions on Eastern Ghouta and the NHS have been posted at

[*https://policyforum.labour.org.uk/commissions/health/nhs-five-year-forward-view*](file:///C:\Users\Ann\AppData\Roaming\Pegasus%20Mail\ImageCache\Admin\%20https:\policyforum.labour.org.uk\commissions\health\nhs-five-year-forward-view)*,* [*https://policyforum.labour.org.uk/commissions/international/eastern-ghouta*](file:///C:\Users\Ann\AppData\Roaming\Pegasus%20Mail\ImageCache\Admin\%20https:\policyforum.labour.org.uk\commissions\international\eastern-ghouta)*,*

*7:37* 6. Urgent business, including any other business.

*7:40* 7. Local elections 3 May: Oxford city and Cherwell. Review of results and general discussion.

*8:05* 8. Parliamentary report. Anneliese Dodds MP.

*8:25* 9. Fundraising collection

*8:25* 10. Announcement of ballot result for Oxford East’s fourth NPF nomination

11. Party democracy review

*8:30* (a) **Phase 2**. Notes of a meeting open to all members on 19 March 2018 in the East Oxford community centre are attached, and have been submitted on behalf of the O&DLP. They will be referred to the executive committee for consideration and action.

*8:30* (b) **Phase 3**. Electing our leadership. Group discussions on the threshold of nominations, the role of registered supporters, the cut-off date for members to participate, and any other related issues, followed by votes on key points.

12. Motions

*9:10* 12.1 **Trans women and all-women shortlists** proposed by the South West Central branch

This meeting resolves to support the current Labour Party policy of allowing trans women to be included in all-women shortlists.

*9:15* 12.2 **Anti-semitism** proposed by the Rose Hill, Iffley & Littlemore branch. NB guidance from the general secretary is also attached.

This meeting notes

1. Jeremy Corbyn’s acknowledgement of the anti-semitic content of the East London mural, and his regret in opposing the removal of the mural in 2012

2. The subsequent letter of concern about anti-semitism in the Labour Party from the Jewish Board of Deputies to Jeremy Corbyn

3. Jeremy Corbyn’s letter of response to the BOD (Appendix 1) in which he acknowledges that forms of anti-semitism do exist on the left

This meeting believes

1. That anti semitism does exist on the left and in the Labour Party, but more widely there is a lack of understanding about what it looks like

2. That anti-semitism on the left is usually not expressed in the form of explicit Jew-hatred or racism, but can manifest in a number of sometimes more subtle and nuanced forms, such as

- Conspiracy theories – such as the Rothschild’s conspiracy – which portray world affairs as being covertly controlled by traditionally Jewish bankers and financiers.

- Similarly conspiratorial political formulas in which “Israel” or a “Zionist lobby” or “Zionists” are expressed as an all-encompassing and uniquely evil global power – rather than a typical capitalist nation state pursuing it’s political interests, or a plurality of Israeli nationalisms.

- The idea that Israel is a historically illegitimate state and that the Hebrew Jewish nation in Israel should not have the usual right of nations to self-determination but should in some way be dismantled or destroyed – instead of being able to co-exist alongside an independent Palestinian state freed from Israeli occupation.

3. That these forms of left-anti-semitism exist in the party are a reflection of the level of debate in wider society, and should be primarily combatted through raising the level of political education and debate on these issues inside the party and disputes should be resolved through mediation in the first instance and should only be resolved by expulsions as a last resort.

4. Allegations of anti-semitism should be taken seriously, and all parts of the diverse Jewish community should be respectfully engaged with, whatever their political views.

5. Our commitment as a party to eliminating anti-semitism in its various forms is no more or less important than our commitment to eliminating all other forms of bigotry and racism.

This meeting resolves

- To support Jeremy Corbyn’s letter of reply to the Board of Deputies (Appendix 1)

- To endorse the idea of a wider educational programme on the subject of anti-semitism in the party in parallel with resourcing educational efforts on all forms of racism and bigotry.

- To investigate inviting an appropriate speaker to our branch on the subject of anti-semitism

Appendix 1: Jeremy Corbyn’s letter to the Board of Deputies

Thank you for your letter to the Labour Party concerning anti-Semitism issued as a press statement last night.

First of all, let me acknowledge the anger and upset that provoked it, and repeat my offer of an urgent meeting to discuss the issues you have raised as soon as possible.

I stated yesterday, and repeat today, that I will not tolerate any form of anti-Semitism that exists in or around our party and movement. I am committed to eliminating anti-Semitism wherever it exists.

As I told the Labour Party conference in 2016, anti-Semitism is an evil that led to the worst crimes of the 20th century. Prejudice and hatred of Jewish people has no place whatsoever in the Labour Party, and every one of us has a responsibility to ensure it is never allowed to fester in our society again.

I recognise that anti-Semitism has surfaced within the Labour Party, and has too often been dismissed as simply a matter of a few bad apples. This has caused pain and hurt to Jewish members of our Party and to the wider Jewish community in Britain. I am sincerely sorry for the pain which has been caused, and pledge to redouble my efforts to bring this anxiety to an end.

While the forms of anti-Semitism expressed on the far Right of politics are easily detectable, such as Holocaust denial, there needs to be a deeper understanding of what constitutes anti-Semitism in the labour movement. Sometimes this evil takes familiar forms - the east London mural which has caused such understandable controversy is an example. The idea of Jewish bankers and capitalists exploiting the workers of the world is an old anti-Semitic conspiracy theory. This was long ago, and rightly, described as "the socialism of fools".

I am sorry for not having studied the content of the mural more closely before wrongly questioning its removal in 2012.

Newer forms of anti-Semitism have been woven into criticism of Israeli governments. Criticism of Israel, particularly in relation to the continuing dispossession of the Palestinian people, cannot be avoided. Nevertheless, comparing Israel or the actions of Israeli governments to the Nazis, attributing criticisms of Israel to Jewish characteristics or to Jewish people in general and using abusive phraseology about supporters of Israel such as "Zio" all constitute aspects of contemporary anti-Semitism. And Jewish people must not be held responsible or accountable for the actions of the Israeli government.

The Labour Party has always opposed anti-Semitism, old and new, and always will. We are proud of our deep historical links with Jewish communities, and to have fought alongside generations of Jewish men and women against fascism, prejudice and discrimination. This is a part of our common heritage from which we will never be separated. But I acknowledge that anti-Semitic attitudes have surfaced more often in our ranks in recent years, and that the Party has been too slow in processing some of the cases that have emerged. Early action has nevertheless been taken, and we will work to speed up procedures, to deal with cases of anti-Semitic abuse or attitudes.

I am committed to making our Party a welcoming and secure place for Jewish people. Zero tolerance for anti-Semites means what it says, and the Party will proceed in that spirit. That demands among other things the overdue full implementation of the recommendations of the Chakrabarti report, including a programme of political education to increase awareness and understanding of all forms of anti-Semitism.

The battle against anti-Semitism should never become a party political issue. It must unite all of us if we are both to honour the memory of the victims of the bestial crimes of the 20th century and build a future of equality and justice for all.

In that spirit, I must make it clear that I will never be anything other than a militant opponent of anti-Semitism. In this fight, I am your ally and always will be.

*9:27* 13. Executive committee report. The minutes of the meeting on 15 March 2018 are attached.

*9:29* 14. Future meetings. **Thursday 14 June** (Abingdon United Football Club, speaker from the Labour campaign for electoral reform), **Friday 13 July** (St Clements family centre, topic to be arranged), **Thursday 6 September** (Wesley Memorial Methodist Church, conference motions and possible speaker), **Thursday 11 / Friday 12 October 2018**. Conference reports, and member Jamie Tarlton on his experiences on the EAPPI (Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel)

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