**Draft Minutes of Oxford and District Labour Party All Member Meeting**

**7.30 p.m. on 9 February 2018, St Clements Family Centre**

1. **Attendance and apologies**

**Present*:*** Evin Abrishami, Luke Akehurst, Steve Akers (Chipping Norton CLP), Tany Alexander, Omar Alrawi, Lubna Arshad, Shaista Aziz, Nadine Bely-Summers, Marie-Claire Berthelson, Ann Black, David Blackman, John Bond, Susan Brown, Madeline Burke, Peter Cann, Nigel Chapman, Michaela Collard, James Conroy, Anne Copley, Tiago Corais, Maria Crosta, Jimi Cullen, Michael Dixon, Jane Darke (Chair), Roy Darke, Hosnieh Djafari-Marbini, Anneliese Dodds, Tony Eaude, Ibrahim El-Hendi, Linda Forrest, Simon Garood, Deborah Gill,Julio Gonzales, Juila Goodwin, Colin Gordon, James Grover, Pauline Hamilton, Hester Hand, Ray Hand, Andy Hathaway, Damian Haywood, James Higginbottom, Keith Hill, David Hillman, Richard Howlett, Biddy Hudson, Mark Hull, Steve Hyde, Oscar Idle, Dan Iley-Williamson, Felicity Irwin (minutes), Anna James, Steve Jewitt, Becky Jones, Emma Jones, Sally Joss, Shereen Karmali, Greg Kaser, Gordon Kennedy, Pat Kennedy, Rabyah Khan, Alex Kumar, Barry Lacey, Mark Ladbrooke, Sarah Lasenby, Paul Leach, Anne Lyons,Chris MacMackin, Helen Magee, Bee Maidlow, Zaid Marham, Alex Markham, Stephen Marks, Deborah McIlveen, Bill McKeith, Cherry Mosteshar, Ailsa Naumann, Bobbie Nichols, Pol O Ceallaigh, James O’Donoghue, Simon Ottino,Liz Peretz,Edward Pope, David Preston, Rosemary Preston, Caroline Raine, Andrew Rimmer, Chris Robins, Caroline Russell, Annette Shaw, Linda Smith, Jane Stockton, Atticus Stonestorm, Jane Strother, Richard Tamplin, Geoff Taylor, Keith Taylor, Sian Taylor,Anna Tsui, Emma Turnbull, Marie Vickers, Nick Walker, Janet Warren, Alex Wood, Andy Wykes, Rojeen Qaqu

**Apologies:**  Avril Alexander, Farida Anwar, Jamila Azad, Jana Bek, Becky Boumelha, Paul Burton, Jane Caplan, Marieke Clarke, David Emeny, Deirdre Flintoff, Ian Flintoff, Tim Forster, Dorian Hancock, Alex Hollingsworth, Joel Kaye, Peter Leary, Peter Ledwith, Sue Ledwith, Rob Lemkin, Ben Lloyd-Shogbesan, Michael March, Caroline Morrell, Abdul Rahman, Hannah Riley, John Tanner, Sue Tanner, Ed Turner

1. **Agreement of agenda and timings** These were agreed.
2. **Minutes of the all member meeting on 8 December 2017**

These were agreed as a correct record.

1. **Matters arising**

None.

1. **Urgent business, including any other business**
2. Motions. Summertown & Wolvercote have asked for the motion at 10.2(a) on Haringey to be taken as an emergency in place of motion 10.2(b) on the NHS (branches are only entitled to submit one motion to each all-member meeting). The meeting voted to debate the Haringey emergency motion.
3. **Speaker:** **Giampi Alhadeff**

Brexit and the way ahead for Labour.

Love affair with England, from an early age, which took a few knocksnder Thatcher. Joined Labour Party. Now a mourning going on, the country is tearing itself apart. Cameron, in attempting to unite his party, has resulted in tearing the country apart. The Tories cannot unite the country, they still do not know what sort of Brexit they want.

Issues to consider:

1 - United Kingdom and threat to Northern Ireland – if Britain is outside customs union, how can there not be a hard border? Hard border will put Irish Good Friday Agreement in danger. Eventually will put whole union under strain, when Scots and Northern Irish may choose to leave UK.

2 – Jobs and prosperity – less jobs, less tax, less money for public services will be the result. No magic money tree. It is a fantasy that we can make up loss of trade with other countries.

3 – Health and safety, workers’ rights, the environment – regulations. Tories want to ditch laws that they don’t like, laws that protect workers. EU tax avoidance directive is due to come into effect in a year’s time, it is no wonder that some of Brexit’s biggest backers are keen to leave the EU.

4 – Big issues facing the world – China, one belt, one road, Russia, bullying in middle east and interfering in elections. Climate change, hated by Brexiteers, falling down international agenda. Artificial intelligence, effect on jobs, and how it will be used negatively as a weapon. Leaving EU as it looks as though we will, will limit our ability to have influence on these issues. We will have no voice. Country is divided as never before. Labour has the opportunity to speak up. 2/3 of members want to stay in EU, 2/3 of Labour constituencies voted to leave. My instinct is that Labour needs to be brave, and say we have heard that some of our poorest regions are likely to be hit hardest. Labour has to come out with a clear strong policy and lead on this. 2/3 of young people still want to stay in EU.

Still very much hope that England can pull itself out of this place that it has got itself into.

1. **Motion - Brexit** proposed by the Greater Marston branch

This meeting believes that the Labour Party's policy on Brexit should be to remain in the Customs Union, and hold a second referendum on EU membership: either to accept the final deal and leave, or to remain in the EU."

John Bond moved the motion, Andy Rimmer seconded it.

Contributions and debate

Michaela Collord

Understand how you feel, but do not share views on steps forwards. Do have expectations from a Labour government. What is happening now is appalling, but we need to get Labour Party response right. Second referendum, question is not as easy as return to status quo or take offer on the table. We need to judge the referendum when we get to that situation. Polls suggest if the vote was held again today, it would go the same way. Labour’s position on customs union is clear – stay as close as possible but understand that this is a negotiation and we should not be tied down. We need to be flexible. When it comes to understanding political mood in this country am concerned about Labour getting tied up on this issue. Real issues are NHS, housing, wages, these are concerns that mean something to people.

Bobbie Nichols

What are your views on a second referendum Giampi? Am nervous, do not like referenda, and believe people vote on different issues when referenda are held.

Stephen Marks

Motion is based on two misconceptions and self-indulgence. There is no such organisation as the customs union. If you are not in EU, you cannot be in single market or customs union. Each of which has negotiated a special arrangement. This has to be negotiated. It is not something that we can sign up to. We can say what we want, which is what we have said, that we want the closest possible relationship that we can get. Hostages to fortune. Should do what we did with Maastricht, be opportunist. Need a socialist government, not all these diversions. It is an illusion that a second referendum would produce a different result. The referendum was a big two fingers up to the establishment, and nothing would confirm this more than if the elite decide to reject result and hold referendum again. Should unite behind Keir Starmer’s position.

Pol O Ceallaigh

There is no such thing as customs union or single market, true, but there is the European Free Trade Association which several countries belong to. Such as Lichtenstein.

Ann Black

Proposes amendment to delete part about holding second referendum from the motion.

Chris MacMackin

Difficult issue. On point of regulations, we are talking about what we want Labour Party to do in Parliament. China owns Piraeus – this was privatised because EU was pushing for it to be privatised. EU is passing regulations that will make it harder to reduce carbon emissions. Also will produce regulations that will prevent Labour Party’s nationalisation of rail policy.

Annette Shaw

Given result of last election, government does not have majority to go through with this policy. This is a cross party issue. Different parties need to get together and hopefully defeat the government. This is not the will of the people, they did not vote for economic suicide.

Scott ?

Almost impossible to change our mind after we have left EU, so on question of 2nd referendum, it is democratic to get a say on the final deal when you have all the information about what is on the table.

David Blackman

The last speech was shortest and most convincing. Keir Starmer is coming again to Oxford, he does not reply to my questions about what Labour policy is. We should accept we might not win a 2nd referendum. There should be a parliamentary vote. Should be clear, do we want to stay in EU? Irish border question is so important. Let us have a clear position. Party democracy is shamefully poor in this issue.

Giampi Alhadeff

Will address one question, in discussion with Neil Kinnock, and Richard Corbett, my advice would be not to get involved in question on 2nd referendum at this stage. Parliament is going to have a vote and this is a great victory. Should leave this obstacle until later in the race. Should consider losses and go for as long a transition period as possible.

Keith Hill

Labour’s policy seems to be summed up by ‘jobs Brexit’. There is no jobs Brexit. Three million jobs will go. Political leadership takes guts and commitment. We haven’t committed to customs union or single market. It will affect our NHS because we won’t have income to fund NHS. This is a fundamental decision.

Luke Akehurst

Extremely sympathetic to dilemmas that Corbyn has dealt with on this issue over last few years. Internationalist party and 2/3 intellectual dilemma. He has trod this tightrope well, but at some point you have to choose which way to go. Electoral factor is exaggerated. Not every Labour voter who believes in leave would stop supporting us. Sometimes you just have to do the right thing. Stephen spoke of the vision to do things as Labour government, but our ability to do anything if we leave EU will be nil, we will be dealing with collapse of industries. Should also avoid being completely inconsistent. We were almost all out campaigning for remain two years ago. There is an honest tradition of Lexit within the Labour party. If you support it, you should be honest and not pretend this is tactical question. Want to rejoin, should be as aligned as possible so we can re-join. Believe in being in EU.

Hosnieh Djafari-Marbini

Told quite a lot of patients recently that operations are being cancelled. Public mood is not for this discussion of second referendum. This is not as binary as we are making out to be. Should allow our representative in Parliament to this. Do think Keir Starmer is doing right thing. This sort of motion is divisive.

The amendment was accepted.

John – right to reply

The amended motion was carried by a large majority, with 17 against and 15 abstentions.

1. **Fundraising collection £238.20 was collected.**
2. **Parliamentary report**. Anneliese Dodds MP.

Proud of our party for comradely and well informed debate. Have been doing a lot of work on customs specifically. Have sat on customs bill committee. Am one of shadow treasury team with responsibility for customs as well as tax. Trying to have a policy that applies across the Labour Party. Would be good to have stronger policy on customs union. Government has said there is no way to avoid a hard border unless we are in the Customs Union. We are already aiming for a very close customs relationship so is semantics to worry about being in favour of a or the customs union. The Tories will split on this. Do want to make sure that we have a united Labour Party. This is how we can win the next election.

Have continued work on tax avoidance and we have had first ever vote on tax treaty with another country. Meant to see other tax treaties coming to Commons for decision but not yet appeared. Money laundering also coming up. Why is London getting a reputation as a good place to launder money?

Also working on number of areas of social security. Government is trying to suggest that by increasing income tax threshold, has solved problems of poverty. But is cancelled out by changes to social security. Have seen very sad child poverty figures. Almost 1/3 of children in Oxford East are growing up in poverty.

NHS winter crisis - it has been worse than ever. Three million on waiting list, very high rate of operations being cancelled.

Set out emergency budget for health. We have particular problems of recruitment and retention in Oxford because of high cost of housing/living.

Helen and Douglas House- concerned about closure of young adult services. We have motion on housing and homelessness later in meeting.

Pleased homes fit for habitation bill passed.

Busy time for casework. Would like to pay tribute to my staff as ever. We have very international population in Oxford with many issues.

Questions and contributions

Damian Haywood

Helen and Douglas House – unfortunately there was not the appetite for funding this in CCG (clinical commissioning group). This is an awful situation.

Liz Peretz

On NHS, Ashworth made strong speech on NHS. We don’t have to have this situation. Need to get back to social care and health system free at point of use. Tories are moving as fast as they can..We must not sleep walk into what is being done by the CG etc.

David

Has Helen and Douglas House really gone beyond point of saving?

Damian Haywood

No public money goes into Helen and Douglas House.

Sarah

CCG might have been within reason not to fund it, but now we must demand that they do.

Ann Black

Requested Damian draft message urging support for Helen and Douglas House from Oxford Labour Party.

This was agreed.

Debbie McIlveen?

300 beds that were closed that Liz was talking about – can we send a letter on this also.

1. **Motions**

10.1 **Afrin** proposed by the East Oxford branch

The Turkish army is engaged in illegal cross-border invasion of the Syrian-Kurdish region of Afrin and indiscriminately bombing all the villages and towns. There are scores of civilian deaths and casualties. The graphic pictures emerging in the past few days are horrifying, so many children massacred so violently. The Turkish State, an EU candidate, ally of the West and second largest NATO army, launched an act of aggression against the same people who earned the world’s respect for defeating ISIS with their courageous sacrifices and historic resistance. The military campaign includes pro-Erdogan Syrian Jihadist mercenaries, and poses a dire threat to 800,000 civilians, half of whom are internally displaced people who sought refuge in Afrin from regions like Aleppo and Idlib, as Afrin was the most safe and stable region throughout the 6 years bloody war in Syria.

**The members of OKSA and I urgently want our British government**, as a member of NATO,to call on Turkish government to stop the military aggressions and invasion, that undermine the current peace efforts in the region and threatens so many civilian lives and instead seek a peaceful political solution to the Kurdish issue.

Proposed by Evin Abrishami and seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

Oxford based Afrin committee are holding meeting this weekend and would welcome participants.

Oxford Emergency Committee for Afrin – can be found on Facebook or please email [iabri@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:iabri@yahoo.co.uk) to get in contact.

10.2 (a) **Haringey and the NEC** proposed by Summertown & Wolvercote branch

This meeting supports the recent decision of the Labour Party NEC to intervene in the issue surrounding the controversial Haringey Development Vehicle (HDV). The measured and conciliatory intervention was made in response to a request from a number of Haringey councillors and union representatives, and was called for given the outcry of the local community against the HDV, and its lack of democratic mandate (having never appeared in a manifesto). The motion, which called for mediation to resolve the matter amicably, and advised a pause in the process, was carried unanimously by the NEC. Against a background of the failure of Carillion and problems in Capita, we welcome the actions of the NEC in acting within Labour Party rules to uphold Labour’s commitment to stop all outsourcing.

Jane Stockton proposed and Dan Iley-Williamson seconded the motion.

Luke Akehurst opposed the motion

… proposed that motion not be put.

Meeting voted to take the motion and it was carried by a clear majority, with six against and 20 abstentions.

10.3. **Rough sleeping is a national emergency** proposed by South West Central branch

a. This meeting notes:

* + 1. Levels of rough sleeping have increased dramatically in recent years, both nationally and locally.
    2. Funding for homelessness services have been slashed by the Conservative government and the Conservative-led County Council.
    3. Community-led initiatives in Oxford, like ‘Iffley Open House’, Oxford Homeless Project, and ‘Homes4All’, have helped to alleviate the harm rough sleepers are forced to endure.
    4. Oxford City Council has maintained its funding for homelessness services, and has secured additional funding for preventing homelessness.
    5. Oxford City Council published a report entitled “The Use of Empty Buildings as Temporary Accommodation for Homeless People”, which concludes that the Council should work with stakeholders to provide innovative solutions to end rough sleeping.
    6. Oxford City Council currently activates its Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) only when temperatures are forecast to fall below freezing for 3 consecutive nights.

b. This meeting believes:

i. Rough sleeping and homelessness will only be solved by a radical shift in government policy towards housing, as called for by the 2017 Labour Manifesto – especially regarding its house building programme (focused on building council house), rent caps, and strengthened rights for renters.

ii. Until government policy significantly changes, Labour led councils should do their utmost to alleviate the worst effects of the housing crisis, especially in terms of alleviating the injustice of people being forced to sleep rough.

c. This meeting resolves to support the Labour-led Oxford City Council, and Labour groups on County & District levels across Oxfordshire, in their efforts, specially including effort to:

* + - 1. Support existing community-led initiatives and provide an enabling environment for future interventions to take place,
      2. Investigate how to use more Council-owned properties for temporary accommodation of homeless people,
      3. Actively engage with property-owners – especially large institutions like universities and faith organisations – to identify suitable buildings,
      4. Help to coordinate amongst property owners, community groups, charities, outreach services and the homeless to ensure the successful development of guardianship and shelter schemes.
      5. Remain open and innovative to ensure the best use of empty spaces not only for homeless accommodation but for other purposes as well, such as a soup kitchen, social enterprise hub or community art fair,
      6. Take steps to allow SWEP to be activated whenever temperatures are forecast to fall below freezing and not only after three days.

The motion was proposed by Richard Howlett and formally seconded by Shaista Aziz.

The motion was unanimously carried.

Linda Smith spoke to indicate the work of the City Council in combatting rough sleeping and local innovations like the churches working together to provide additional winter accommodation.

1. **Executive committee report**. The minutes of the meeting on 18 January 2018 have been circulated for note.
2. **National executive committee.** Reports from NEC members Ann Black and Pete Willsman have also been circulated for information.
3. **Future meetings** These were noted as **Friday 9 March 2018** (Rose Hill community centre, AGM and, provisionally, discussion of the party democracy review), **Thursday 10 May** (Wesley Memorial Methodist Church, review of elections and speaker on co-housing), **Thursday 14 June** (Abingdon United Football Club, speaker from the Labour campaign for electoral reform), **Thursday 12 / Friday 13 July 2018** (venue and topic to be arranged), **Thursday 6 / Friday 7 September 2018** (first Thursday / Friday to meet deadline for conference motions, venue to be arranged).
4. **Announcements**

Keir Starmer dinner 1 March – details on Oxford Labour website.

Tomorrow unfair dismissal rally to support GMB taxi drivers 12pm outside Oxford City Council.

Speakers on Afrin have offered to speak at branch meetings – can be contacted via Ann Black or by email iabri@yahoo.co.uk

Labour Movement for Europe – Giampi said he has stepped down as Chair but is continuing to be involved. Leaflets were available for members wishing to join.