## Draft Minutes of the Oxford & District Executive Committee, 15 March 2018

**Present:** Shaista Aziz, Ann Black (minutes), David Blackman, Becky Boumelha, Susan Brown, Nigel Chapman, Michaela Collord, Jane Darke (Chair), Erica Davis, Hosnieh Djafari-Marbini, Mo Fadlalla, Anisha Faruk, Ray Hand, Tom Hayes, Alex Hollingsworth, Dan Iley-Williamson, Rabyah Khan, Stephen Marks, Cherry Mosteshar, Peter Nowland, Hannah Riley, Linda Smith, Jane Stockton, Marie Tidball

**Apologies**: Helen Evans, Ian Flintoff, Felicity Irwin, Mark Ladbrooke, Andrew Peak, Ed Turner

1. Welcome. Members introduced themselves, and Jane D, in the chair, explained that policy decisions rested with the all-member meetings, with the executive committee responsible for planning, administration, selections, finance and generally the smooth running of the local party.

2. Executive committee minutes, 21 February 2018. These were agreed as a correct record.

3. Matters arising. None.

4. Urgent business / other business.

(a) **Event for BAME members**. Becky announced a film screening on Sunday 25 March in Barton for BAME members and supporters. She would send details to Hannah for the members’ mailing.

(b) **Motions**. Hosnieh and Stephen proposed discussing how the motions agreed at recent all-member meetings were being taken forward. It was agreed to consider the NHS motion under campaigning. Ann explained that other motions were submitted to the relevant policy commission and / or sent to the relevant shadow ministers or others, and this was reported to the following AMM. [*Motions from February and March are 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)*,* [*https://policyforum.labour.org.uk/commissions/housing-transport/rough-sleeping*](file:///C:\Users\Ann\AppData\Roaming\Pegasus%20Mail\ImageCache\Admin\%20https:\policyforum.labour.org.uk\commissions\housing-transport\rough-sleeping)*,* [*https://policyforum.labour.org.uk/commissions/international/afrin*](file:///C:\Users\Ann\AppData\Roaming\Pegasus%20Mail\ImageCache\Admin\%20https:\policyforum.labour.org.uk\commissions\international\afrin)*,* [*https://policyforum.labour.org.uk/commissions/international/brexit-and-the-customs-union*](file:///C:\Users\Ann\AppData\Roaming\Pegasus%20Mail\ImageCache\Admin\%20https:\policyforum.labour.org.uk\commissions\international\brexit-and-the-customs-union) ]

5. AGM 9 March 2018

(a) **Annual conference delegates**. The executive confirmed that exceptionally Oxford East would send three delegates this year, after three tied votes at the AGM. As the highest-polling candidates Becky and Jane S would be the “first delegate” for administrative purposes in Oxford East and OxWAb respectively. Ann would send details of the hotel booking for the four planned delegates, and was negotiating an additional room for Marie. A small amount of the disability network grant might be available to support this.

(b) **Women’s conference delegates**. CLPs were entitled to send one voting delegate each, plus visitors. It was agreed that Becky and Jane S would be the voting delegates.

(c) **Nominations for national committees**. All ballots for all positions were completed with the exception of the fourth nomination for the national policy forum from Oxford East. It was agreed to hold the run-off at the May all-member meeting, with delegates registering and completing ballot papers. This should not require significant extra resources.

6. Finance

(a) **Treasurer’s report**. Alex reported that all was going according to plan.

(b) **Fundraising**. The Keir Starmer dinner had raised more than £3,000 for campaigning. Some members felt that £40 was too high and did not send an inclusive message. However the event was fully booked, with significant numbers from outside Oxford. Hannah had discreetly approached students to make sure they were able to take part, and described her efforts in persuading Keir to come despite the snow, without which members would have paid £40 for the food alone. Jane S suggested that at future fundraising dinners, the guest speaker and other office holders who are present should be reserved seats amongst the ordinary members.

Alex suggested that the local party should aim to organise three broad types of event: first, those which were primarily fundraisers; second, lower cost fish-and-chip type suppers, with one planned for Kidlington; and third, picnics and other free activities. Marsha de Cordova MP was suggested as a guest.

Various ideas were put forward for reaching out into communities: a picnic after the elections and after Ramadan (15 May – 14 June); an Eid celebration including solidarity with Muslim MPs who had been receiving abuse and threats; marking Chinese New Year; connecting with the picnic for Polish residents in late June; liaising with Afro-Caribbeam and Persian groups; an alumni picnic for students in a college garden; an event in Blackbird Leys;. Jane D suggested that the BAME officers draw up a calendar of significant dates.

7. Campaigning and forthcoming elections

(a) **Oxford city council elections, 3 May 2018**. Hosnieh was congratulated on her selection for Northfield Brook. Hannah reported that she, Nigel and Jane D would interview candidates for assistant organiser on Monday 19 March. Jane asked the Labour group to consider buddying / mentoring for new councillors, and Susan confirmed that this was planned, in addition to the induction provided by the council.

(b) **OxWAb elections**. Kidlington had elections every year, and in 2019 there would also be elections in the Vale and for every parish council in OxWAb. With no elections in Oxford city next year members should be encouraged to help in these wards, as well as in parliamentary priority seats such as Milton Keynes. Four target wards in OxWAb had been identified, two in Abingdon plus Botley & Cumnor and Kidlington East. Twinning with wards in Oxford city was suggested.

(c) **Branch meetings**. Branches should not be meeting after the short campaign started on 28 March, not only because it diverted energy from canvassing but also because all spending in this period counted towards election expenses. Jane S would write to remind branches. [*A number have already scheduled meetings, and next time this needs to be explained earlier in the year.*]

(d) **Voter registration**. The deadline was 17 April, and street stalls in low turnout areas were suggested, with other measures to increase democratic participation.

(e) **Issue-based campaigning**. Hannah and Nigel had produced leaflets on homelessness and housing for general use. The meeting agreed that Hosnieh should convene a small group to develop campaign material around local NHS issues, also involving relevant city and county portfolio holders. Jane S was continuing to encourage branches to hold street stalls, with a regular stall in the city centre for areas with no obvious local focus. Erica reported that these were very successful, with more than 1000 signatures collected at a recent stall.

8. Organiser’s report. Hannah reported on voter ID contacts against targets, setting up an online housing campaign, learning to use Promote, letters to postal voters, and phone banking with pizza from the office. She had been to a Kidlington West canvass, though only she and the branch secretary turned out. Posters should arrive by 27 March. The manifesto launch was still being arranged [*now confirmed as 27 March with John Healey*]. Members offered to help Hannah chase candidates for copy, wards for committee room information, and anything else and thanked her for all her work.

9. Party democracy review.

(a) **Members’ consultation**. Dan and Jane S had organised a meeting to discuss the second phase of the review, from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. on Monday 19 March at the East Oxford community centre.

(b) **Disability**. It was agreed to submit the report prepared by Marie and the disability network in the name of the Oxford & District Party. She was congratulated on an extensive and detailed paper. Marie also said that city council officers were engaging actively with the disability agenda, including reading-aloud software, personal assistant support and an accessibility review of the Town Hall.

Members raised the problems faced by people who wished to join the party but couldn’t use direct debit to pay subscriptions, including those who were mentally ill, on low incomes, homeless, or didn’t have a bank account for other reasons. Ann would try to follow this up through the NEC.

10. Membership. At 14 March there were 2364 members in Oxford East and 1510 in OxWAB, including those up to six months in arrears. Recruitment was beginning to rise again. Jane S was providing training in MemberCentre to new branch secretaries and membership secretaries. It was agreed that the next new members’ social should be held after the May elections.

11. Executive committee meetings. Based on replies to Ann’s requests, meetings would be held on Wednesday 16 May and Wednesday 18 July, with the June meeting on either Wednesday 20 June or Thursday 28 June, venues to be arranged. The East Oxford community centre and the Asian cultural centre were suggested as alternatives to the Regal community centre.

12. All-member meetings.

(a) **Thursday 10 May 2018**. Wesley Memorial Methodist Church, review of elections and a speaker from Oxford Co-Housing on community-led and affordable housing.

(b) **Thursday 14 June 2018**. Abingdon United Football Club, Mary Southcott from the Labour Campaign for Electoral Reform.

(c) **Friday 13 July 2018**. St Clements family centre, topic to be arranged.

(d) **Thursday 6 / Friday 7 September 2018**. NB first Thursday / Friday to meet deadline for conference motions. Ann would try to book the Wesley Memorial Methodist Church.

(e) **Thursday 11 / Friday 12 October 2018**. Conference reportback, and member Jamie Tarlton on his experiences on the EAPPI (Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel.

Speakers suggested were Dr Dougal Hargreaves (Hosnieh’s brother-in-law) on child poverty and health; Danny Dorling, on similar themes but perhaps better suited for a public meeting; Paul Mason; a Grenfell campaigner. Previous proposals included James Fry to speak on sustainability and food security in the post-Brexit era, and a speaker on the living wage. [*Since the meeting Geoff Taylor from Kidlington & Yarnton, and Rabyah, have put forward further ideas*]

Dan thought that meetings should not be held on Fridays, partly because of the high cost of babysitters. Ann said that Fridays were better for guaranteeing our MP’s attendance, some members preferred Fridays, the next two meetings were on Thursdays, and St Clements family centre was only available on the Friday in July. She asked for suggestions for other affordable venues which could seat up to 120 people.

Stephen was organising another economics dayschool on Saturday 23 June, with Anneliese, Sue Hiimmelrich from the women’s budget group, and Mariana Mazzucato.

13. Class. Working-class people continued to be under-represented at every level within the party. Alex pointed out that membership was lowest in white working-class areas, and there was real deprivation in parts of Gosford, Botley and Abingdon South. This linked in with casual and insecure employment and bogus self-employment. Mo agreed, speaking from his own experience of being dismissed because he was “not really an employee”, and Susan added the latest scandal of “trial working” where people were asked to work a long shift without pay and then not offered a job. The living wage and trade union rights were considered to be key campaigning issues among these groups

14. Youth. Michaela added that Labour ought to be reaching into schools and engaging with young people. [*NB the minutes of the previous EC meeting include “Andrew was planning to write to schools offering speakers, with the letters to Oxford East schools signed by Anneliese and those in Oxford West & Abingdon signed by Ann.”*]