## Draft Minutes of the Oxford & District Executive Committee, 21 November 2018

**Present:** Ann Black (minutes), David Blackman, Becky Boumelha, Susan Brown, Nigel Chapman, Jane Darke (Chair), Alex Hollingsworth, Rabyah Khan, Felicity Leary, Stephen Marks, Peter Nowland, Caroline Raine, Hannah Riley (up to item 8), Linda Smith, John Stansby, Jane Stockton

**Apologies**: Shaista Aziz, Michaela Collord, Erica Davis, Hosnieh Djafari Marbini, Ray Hand, Tom Hayes, Mark Ladbrooke

1. Executive committee minutes, 24 October 2018. These were agreed as a correct record.

2. Matters arising.

(a) **4 Oxford city Labour group report**. The minute was deliberately brief for reasons of confidentiality, but members not present were assured that all aspects were fully discussed.

3. Urgent business / other business. A report from the Oxford city Labour group was taken as item 5.

4. National women’s conference, 23/24 February 2019, Telford. Following discussion of a paper by Ann it was agreed

to send one delegate from each CLP at a cost per delegate of £88 fee / pooled fare, plus travel, plus accommodation for Saturday night at a maximum of £36 (the cost of rooms pre-booked by Ann, now going for £65), plus breakfast. If delegates were required to be there on Friday night for compositing an additional night would be paid, but this would not be known until February.

Some suggested paying the Friday night as well and perhaps sending more delegates. However the total budget for conferences is £2,000, overspent by 50% in 2018 with no matching income. Most of this was required for two delegates per CLP at annual conference, and as in 2018 there might be further events relating to party democracy where the CLP would wish to be represented.

that there was insufficient time to involve branches in electing delegates, nominating for the women’s conference arrangements committee (WCAC) and proposing motions, all with a deadline of 14 January 2019. It was therefore agreed that any two women general committee delegates from each CLP would be able to put forward candidates, nominations and motions by 30 December 2018, with votes within the all-member meeting on 10 January 2019. Details are below:

Delegates. Any woman member may be nominated by any two women GC delegates within her CLP, with elections by women GC delegates within the CLP on 10 January;

WCAC nominations. Up to three candidates may be nominated by any two women GC delegates within each CLP, with nominations determined by votes by women GC delegates within each CLP on 10 January. As with most elections candidates do not need nomination by their own CLP. It was unlikely that any candidates would withdraw between 10 and 14 January, but if this happened their place would be left vacant when submitting nominations;

Motions. These must be no longer than 250 words, be relevant to women, address one issue only, and not propose an organisational change. Any two women GC delegates across the two CLPs may propose a motion. These will be debated on 10 January, with all women members entitled to vote for or against, and then if necessary to prioritise two motions to go forward.

for this conference, delegates would be mandated to vote for the WCAC candidates nominated by their CLP i.e. voting to nominate a candidate on 10 January would also be taken as voting to support them at the conference on 23 February. However if any of the three candidates withdrew further ballots of women GC delegates would be conducted within the February AMM.

Whether nomination also implies support would be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. For the next NCC cycle nominations will be made at the AGM on 7 March but the election is not till conference, so a further ballot on which candidates to vpte for should be held within the September AMM.

delegates would be expected to take the views of the CLP into account when deciding which subject areas to prioritise. Sometimes there are arguments for not choosing a topic submitted by the CLP, for instance if the trade unions have guaranteed it a place on the agenda.

**Action:** Ann to write to GC delegates seeking nominations and motions.

5. Oxford city Labour group. Susan reported on councillor David Henwood’s decision to resign from the Labour group and sit as an independent. If he did not rejoin within two weeks his party membership would also cease. She regretted press coverage which was inaccurate and which suggested that Labour did not take bullying seriously. Any matters relating to Littlemore parish council would be investigated by the city council’s standards committee. It was possible that other party members might need support.

6. Finance

(a) **Budget 2019**. Alex reported that one-off donations raised only £1,500 in 2018, plus £4,000 from the city Labour group. We overspent the conference budget of £2,000 by nearly 50%, and also spent more on quality external printing. Next year campaigning costs would be lower, with no Oxford city elections, but this would be followed by all-out elections in 2020 which would be more expensive. He tabled a budget for 2019 which attempted to control costs and increase income, and this was agreed. It was suggested that we ask members to donate, linked to the Cherwell and Vale elections, and also contact the unions, though they were more likely to give for general elections. The USDAW constituency development plan provides £2,000 a year, and Ann would invite their new general secretary Paddy Lillis, perhaps to a fish-and-chip supper. **Action:** Ann. Ann also suggested that we could apply to the NEC development fund which had supported Marie’s disability network, perhaps for a project around working-class participation.

(b) **Printing**. In view of widespread calls for higher-quality literature Alex and Hannah had looked at replacements for the Risograph. Depending on how far internal printing would replace printing currently done externally the additional cost was likely to be between £1,500 and £5,000 a year, with better-quality paper also more expensive. After discussion the committee authorised Alex to sign a six-year lease for a colour printer. Further work would be done on specifying what centrally-printed materials branches could reasonably expect, and the campaign co-ordinator and campaign committee would monitor spending to keep within the print budget. **Action**: Andrew, Alex.

7. Elections and campaigns

(a) **Wolvercote by-election**. Jane S thanked members who were helping, and reported that around one-third of the ward had been canvassed so far.

(b) **Council elections, May 2019**. Further candidates were needed in Kidlington and the Vale, and the executive agreed to ask Andrew to take the lead in organising a ring round of members to encourage them to stand.  **Action:**Andrew

(c) **Oxford city council boundary review**. Alex reported that the electoral commissioner had accepted some of our recommendations, but proposed alternatives for the East Oxford area. Splitting Iffley from Rose Hill was proving particularly unpopular with residents. It was agreed to suggest a compromise which, while not as good as our original scheme, acknowledged the commissioner’s concerns. Alex would circulate details to interested members. **Action:** Alex

(d) **Diversity and inclusivity in selecting candidates**. Deferred due to lack of time.

8. All-member meetings. The executive agreed a schedule of meetings through 2019, and thanked Rabyah for taking the initiative on this. Felicity agreed to explore dates and venues, liaising with local contacts. **Action**: Ann / Felicity. Jane S said that the Summertown & Wolvercote branch would provide refreshments for the 14 December meeting. Rachel Eden, former co-chair of the Oxford & District Party and the parliamentary candidate for Reading West, had been invited to meet members.

9. Annual general meeting, Thursday 7 March 2019

(a) **Date**. Fortunately the Rose Hill community centre was available on the Thursday and this avoided a clash with an international women’s day panel on Friday 8 March, raised at the November AMM.

(b) **Delegates, officers, national committees**. Branches would be asked to hold their AGMs before Wednesday 20 February 2019 which would be the deadline for electing delegates and submitting nominations for officers, delegates and representatives on the conference arrangements committee and the national constitutional committee.

(c) **Rule changes**. The executive committee agreed

(i) to create a new post of policy officer, as required by the democracy review, which would probably involve liaising with national policy-making structures. This would replace the former political education officer, part of Tony Blair’s *Partnership in Power* project and previously included in our list of officers but dropped because it met no obvious need.

(ii) to replace the post of deputy treasurer with the post of fundraising officer, in line with model rules, and with the actual responsibilities of the current and previous postholder.

(iii) to ask branches to elect a women’s officer as well as Chair, vice-chair, secretary and treasurer.

There was no consensus on whether to create a social media officer. Demands could be extensive and open-ended, and it was important to define these and to ensure that the postholder had the technical skills as well as the time to meet them. Currently Rabyah, Nigel and Hannah can post from the CLP Twitter account. Rabyah pointed out that previous discussions had shown a clear need for consistent and constant social media support from the CLP, and that need was likely to grow, particularly around election times and the all-out 2020 Oxford city council elections. Jane S suggested also providing social media support for candidates who do not have social media skills themselves.

If a clear and manageable role description could be drawn up, the executive committee had the power to co-opt members to meet specific needs, without voting power, and formalising the position could be revisited in the following year.

10. Staffing options. Alex put forward a paper on the budgetary implications of employing a local organiser to work for five days a week for the party, rather than the current four days a week (and five in election periods) plus one day a week working for the MP. There were different views on the benefits, but the over-riding consideration was the £6,000 extra cost, at a time when we were not always meeting existing fundraising targets, and had just committed the party to a six-year printer contract. It was agreed not to proceed at the present time, but to keep the idea under review should finances improve.

Ann added that until 2015 our organisers had worked almost exclusively on local elections, organising and publicising voter ID sessions, with a period of intensive work during the short campaign. With the surge in membership around Jeremy Corbyn’s election demands for support with party meetings and events, and the broadening of the weekly newsletter, had increased in kind as well as in quantity.

11. Membership. Jane S circulated a report. There were 2,344 members in Oxford East and 1,472 in Oxford West & Abingdon, including those up to six months in arrears. After the successful new / existing members’ social with Richard Burgon and surprise guest Gordon Brown, she suggested inviting Chris Williamson to the next such event. There were different views on this and further consultation was requested, including with Anneliese.

Cherry reported that she had found many cultural celebrations throughout the year, and appealed for help from other EC volunteers in developing plans around these. Caroline offered to assist.

12. Reports. Reports from trade union liaison officers Mark and Pete, and women’s officer Shaista, had been circulated to executive members.

13. Executive committee meetings. Wednesday 23 January 2019, Wednesday 20 February 2019, start time and venue to be notified. **Action**: Ann to book rooms.