Minutes of South West Central branch AGM on Tuesday 16th January 2018

1. Present: Pol O Ceallaigh, John & Sue Tanner, Pat & Gordon Kennedy, Richard & Ruth Shallard, Freya Chambers, Anisha Faruk, Ray Williams, Marina Lambrakis, Ross Spear, Abdul Rahman, Edward Pope, Tom Newport, Tonya Kocharova, Lucas Bertholdi -Saad, Chris MacMackin, Tony Richardson, Atticus Stonestrom, Hugo Raine, Tom Zagoria, Anna Gueriento, Stephen Marks, Anne Lyons, Susanna Pressel, Alex Kumar, Jimi Cullen, Sobia Afridi, Richard Howlett, Yasmeen Sultan, Lisa Martineau, Bob Price, Alex Donnelly, Katie Beere, Emma Turnbull, Nadine Bely-Summers, Alex Hollingsworth, Felicity Irwin, Julian Hamilton, Susan Brown, Dan Iley-Williamson, Colin Cook & Marie Tidball (chair).
2. Apologies: Phyllis Starkey, Bill MacKeith, Liz Peretz, Bruce McLaren, Harm-Jan Fricke, Peter Leary, jenny Stanton, Issy Hollingsworth & Wendy Mantle.
3. Minutes: The minutes of 17/11/17 and the AGM on 17/1/17 were agreed.
4. Reports:
   1. **Cllr Emma Turnbull** said Labour’s alternative budget on the County Council would focus on youth mental health, adult social care and green investment by the pension fund.
   2. **Cllr Alex Hollingsworth** said the City Council budget would have extra for the homeless and higher parking charges. The Westgate centre had opened and there will be a new Local Plan.
   3. **Richard Shallard**, the treasurer, reported £134 in the account. The secretary to publicise standing orders. A collection raised £94.
5. Draft Manifesto: **Cllr Bob Price** introduced the draft manifesto for the City Council elections. A summary of the pledges was circulated. There was support for more help for the street homeless, more secure cycle parking and for small business. **The chair will discuss children’s social care with** **Tonya and Emma Turnbull outside the meeting.** The final manifesto will be agreed by the City Labour group.
6. Elections:
   1. Branch officers were elected. Chair: **Tonya Kocharova**, Vice chairs: **Marie Tidball &** **Liz Peretz**, Secretary**: John Tanner**, Treasurer: **Richard Shallard**, Membership Secretary: **Felicity Irwin**.
   2. Nominations to Oxford Party: Chair: Jane Darke, Vice Chairs: Stephen Marks & Nigel Chapman, Secretary: Ann Black, Treasurer: Alex Hollingsworth, Women’s Officer: Helen Evans/Shaista Aziz jobshare, Ethnic Minorities: Jamila Azad/Becky Boumelha jobshare, Disability: Marie Tidball.
7. Delegates: The following were elected: Sue Tanner, Emma Turnbull, Felicity Irwin, Anna Gueriento, Marina Lambrakis, Julia Hamilton, Anne Lyons, Anisha Faruk, Freya Chambers, Pat Kennedy, Susan Brown, Marie Tidball, Izzy Hollingsworth, Phyllis Starkey & Liz Peretz (15 women). Edward Pope, Pol O Ceallaigh, Abdul Rahman, Christopher MacMackin, Alex Hollingsworth, Peter Leary, Hugo Raine, Jack Kelly, Stephen Marks, Ray Williams, Jimi Cullen, Gordon Kennedy, Bob Price, Bill MacKeith & Tony Richardson (15 men).
8. Party Conference: Nominations for Oxford East: On a vote Marie Tidball & Emma Turnbull. Oxford West & Abingdon: Felicity Irwin & Jane Stockton.
9. Motion: Lucas proposed and Hugo seconded a motion on rough sleeping. After debate this amended version was agreed unanimously.
   1. Rough sleeping is a national emergency – greater action is needed
      1. This meeting notes:
      2. Levels of rough sleeping have increased dramatically in recent years, both nationally and locally.
      3. Funding for homelessness services have been slashed by the Conservative government and the Conservative-led County Council.
      4. 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.
      5. Oxford City Council has maintained its funding for homelessness services, and has secured additional funding for preventing homelessness.
      6. 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.
      7. Oxford City Council currently activates its Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) only when temperatures are forecast to fall below freezing for 3 consecutive nights.
   2. This meeting believes:
      1. 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.
      2. 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.
   3. This meeting resolves
      1. 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.

John Tanner, secretary 17/1/18