

Minutes – Socialist Societies Executive

Tuesday 18 March 2008

Present: Sally Mulready, Nigel Spearing, Nicholas Russell, Martin Dore, Jacky Peacock, Dianne Hayter, David Caplin, Simon Wright.

1.Introductions and apologies

Apologies: Martin Rathfelder, Andrew Pakes, Melanie Smallman, Bill Thomas, Andrew Bradstock, Fred Grindrod, Sheila Dore, Gareth Davies, Carlie Newman, Jim Moher, Sunder Katwala, Marianne Hood.

2.Minutes of meetings 28 January 2008

Agreed. Noted that September meeting is 15 not 22.

3.Matters Arising

None.

4.NEC Report: Dianne Hayter

David Pitt-Watson is new General-Secretary; Colin Smith new Scottish General-Secretary; Roger Baker new Communications Director. May elections current priority, especially to hold BNP out of GLA. Nick Russell will publicise Havering by-election where defeat of BNP would be helpful. Euro selections and ranking done now. NEC considering new board to run business of Party, separate to NEC. Might make Treasurer more of an audit role. Concern that this might downgrade NEC further. Need to have better links with PLP and election planning. Dianne leading NEC visit to Brussels in May. Nigel felt that relationship between Societies and Ministers is weaker now and speculated that Brussels context has restricted Ministers' flexibility. May be a Spring 2009 conference if 2008 was felt to be successful. 18 February meeting of friends/faith supporting groups, went well. Dianne had meeting with Ed Miliband who confirms he is happy to meet when our report done. Might meet in his office this time. Next set of NPF policy documents out on 2 May. May would be a good time for this meeting. No.10 still got SocSoc reception on its list but no development. Nigel Spearing thanked Dianne for her hard work as Chair of NEC at difficult time and celebrated that the Socialist Societies rep is chairing the Party.

5.Plans for the Parliamentary Hearings

Update on the plans for 26 March. Press release the Societies report when written but no plans for press attendance in the meeting. Pre-meeting at 2.30 then session from 3.30-5.30pm. Not yet alerted the PLP. Try to get a Minister's offices to attend. LPDMG might investigate Sharon Hodgson MP

and Janet Seymour-Kirk as witness. SEA approaching Kelvin Hopkins. LPIS may put up Siobhan McDonagh.

6.Spring Conference report back

Thanks to Gareth Gould, Melanie Smallman and Martin Rathfelder for running the stall. Request to share photos. Successful AGM of Labour Transport was held. Lively conference.

7.Next NPF elections

Proposal to have an agreement again between Societies to hold internal hustings and only nominate 3 people. Agreed to go ahead with the usual process on 19 May. Encourage attendance by publicising soon and get nominations. Each Society can only nominate one person. Questions if time allows. Dianne to chair process.

8.Officers' Reports including Treasurer's Report

SW asked to chase about MPUrls. Emma not responding to emails; Dianne to email her and Simon to pass on mobile to Jacky.

9.Any other Business

Alert that NPF documents coming in May. Societies need to get ready to brief their NPF members to influence the manifesto.

Request to put Information Exchange back on agenda.

10.Date of next meetings

19 May 2008, 14 July 2008, 15 September 2008.