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

 **7.30 p.m. on 8 September 2017, Exeter Hall, Kidlington**

1. **Attendance and apologies**

**Present*:*** Shaista Aziz,Avril Alexander, Jamila Azad, M Azad, Jana Bek, Lucas Bertholdi-Saad, Ann Black, Chris Bond, John Bond, Philip Bonnier, Peter Brennan, Peter Cann, Catherine Chapman, Michaela Collord, Tiago Corais, Richard Conibere, Pete Cranston, Jane Darke (Chair), Roy Darke, Erica Davis, Anna Duncan,Tony Eaude, Anneliese Dodds MP, Alex Donnelly, Tony Eaude, Jan Edwards, Jude Egan, Peter Finn, Julio Gonzalez, Julia Goodwin, Damian Haywood, Alex Hollingsworth, Richard Howlett, Jackie Hruby, Dan Iley-Williamson, Felicity Irwin (minutes), Anna James, Sally Joss, Shereen Karmali, Beth Knowles, Richard Knowles, Mark Ladbroke, Sue Ledwith, Ben Lloyd-Shogbesan, Stefan Lacny, Liz Lock, Anne Lyons, Bill Mackeith, Helen Magee, Bee Maidlow,Michael March, Stephen Marks, Christopher MacMackin, Nikki Marriott, Ailsa Naumann, Frank Newhofer, Peter Nowland,Pol O Ceallaigh, James O’Donoghue, Jennifer Pegg,Liz Peretz,Rosemary Preston, Dai Richards, Chris Robins, Martyn Rush, Caroline Russell, John Stanby, Jane Stockton, Jane Struthers, John Tanner, Sue Tanner, Rosemary Tucker, Nick Walker, Janet Warren, Ingrid Widdows, Barry Wooding, D Yates, Martha Young

**Apologies:** Luke Akehurst, Farida Anwar, David Blackman, Paul Burton, Marieke Clarke, Steve Curran, Helen Evans, Deirdre Flintoff, Ian Flintoff, Mashhuda Glencross, Chris Hall, Mark Hull, Bev Humberstone, Peter Leary, Debbie McIlveen, Caroline Morrell, Cherry Mosteshar, Bobbie Nichols, Caroline Pinder, David Preston, Caroline Raine, Andrew Smith, Linda Smith, Peter Willsman

1. **Agreement of agenda and timings**

These were agreed.

1. **Minutes of the all member meeting on 13 July 2017 and matters arising**

These were agreed as a correct record.

1. **Urgent business, including any other business**

Mark Ladbroke

Oxford City Living Wage Campaign - a mass campaign has been set up to support this. An organising campaign meeting will take place on Monday evening, 7.30 East Oxford Community Centre, and it is important that we get a good turnout.

1. **Parliamentary report – Anneliese Dodds MP**

Thank you to everyone who helped with the election campaign. Brilliant result in Oxford and elsewhere in South East. Need to make sure we pick up Reading West, Swindon South. Thank those who campaigned with me in marginal seats over the summer. Unfortunately, the Tories have dug in so an election does not seem to be coming so soon. Nonetheless need to build up support in these marginals, as well as in Oxford East and OxWAb. Also thank you for help in Didcot town council election which we won. Thank you to Jonathan our organiser.

Not able to touch on all policy issues. Written report has been circulated.

Three key issues:

1 – Brexit – many people did want to leave but we are now in dangerous position where the government has not changed its negotiating approach over the summer. They are alienating potential partners in Europe. Priority has to be on ensuring that we have an interim arrangement in place before we leave the EU. Unfortunately, this government is not listening. Need to focus on what forthcoming legislative arrangements will be in place when we leave. We are keen that the government comes to parliament to explain what it is doing to politicians and to the people. This is not a game of poker. We don’t accept the government’s position that it can rewrite legislation about rights without consultation with the public. In relation to this, the new electric Mini is still going to be produced in Oxford, and we are obviously delighted. This was not because of government policy, but because of workforce and this is a medium term decision in terms of the Mini. If we want long term result we need a sensible trade policy.

2 – I am now in the Shadow treasury team working on tax issues. We have had finance bill last week. Government went back on promises it made about not taxing people’s redundancy pay. Widening relief for some non doms at the same time. We pushed them on all of that. Government’s response on redundancy pay, was that we will have one vote, no debate, no discussion. This is not the way we should be deciding important things like this. Government is on shaky ground - there were only two Tories in the chamber willing to defend what they were doing.

3 – Housing – important topic for us during the general election campaign. We had brief discussion about Government’s response to Grenfell tower at a previous meeting. Government has not got the message that it needs to change its approach to social housing. Continue to pursue this with John Healey, Shadow Housing Minister. No clarity whether the Government is going to force councils to sell off housing stock. This could be a big problem for cities such as Oxford. Definition of affordability is unrealistic. Have come from surgery in Barton. People are worried that universal credit only starts after six weeks’ delay and it is very difficult to claim, eg you need a mobile phone and internet. No indication the government is going to change its position on this either.

Happy to take questions.

Questions

John Bond

How do you feel about attempt by the Government to manipulate committees such that they get a majority?

Anneliese Dodds MP

Government is trying to influence committees, also select committees. Seems to be part of general attempt to limit scrutiny, to rig things so that they always get a majority – this is not acceptable. Need to be proactive and put pressure on them in different policy areas.

Jennifer Pegg

Have seen reference to fact that Theresa May may change the proposal to reduce the number of MPs, is this true and is it good for Labour?

Anneliese Dodds MP

Yes appears that Boundary Review will still occur but without a reduction in seats, which will benefit Labour. But other changes e.g. those to registration, still seem to be occurring.

Jane Darke

Pleaded for unity within the PLP, election put an end to sniping and factionalism, is this temporary? Hope for unity to continue.

Anneliese Dodds MP

I don’t have problems with anyone in the PLP, and I assumed we would all work together. Some have battle scars from previous parliament. But there is a good feeling within Labour now, people are supporting the leadership and are focusing on working together, rather than factionalism. If we can use conference time to discuss policies and be unified, we will put ourselves in good stead for the year ahead.

Ann Black

Understand that the DUP is responsible for the Government changing its position on reducing the number of MPs because it would have benefited Sinn Fein.

Roy Darke

General election looks to be some way away. What are you picking up about work that needs to be done by an incoming Labour Government. Perception of background work that the PLP is doing in anticipation of winning the next general election.

Liz Locke

Disappointed by Tories digging in, because Brexit situation seems to be leading them towards a defeat.

Anneliese Dodds MP (responding to both):

With the coalition that supports them, the Government has a majority of 14. If this was lower, then they may go to the polls sooner. We need to be on a campaign footing and also have all the detailed policy work ready. Most of the Shadow team are trying to perform both roles at the same time, and holding the Government to account on what they are doing. Shadow Treasury team has structured programme of engagement with all the different bodies and stakeholders.

Brexit – the conservatives are in a mess over this. Interesting because while the Conservatives have soaked up some of the UKIP vote, they are obviously split on this issue. Conservatives, even those like Anna Soubry, do not seem to be able to break the Conservative whip. They may hang together because stakes are high.

Chris MacMackin

How can members find out about policies? Policy forum documents are completely void of any content. How can we get involved?

Rosemary Tucker

Can you talk about the current situation internationally? It seems as if everyone is on the move, the amount of refugees in the world is the worst I have ever seen.

Shaista Aziz

Would like to see Labour speaking out more clearly, in strong solidarity against racism after the horrendous summer we have had, particularly with Sarah Champion’s comments and what she has put the party through. UKIP was strengthened by the Tories pandering to racism. As the left we should be very vocal and clear about standing up to racism.

Anneliese Dodds MP

International situation is incredibly worrying and I don’t feel that we have had the response that we should have done as a country. Recent issue in media of refugees from Burma. We as Labour have been trying to act on that. I signed up to Rushanara Ali letter and have been supporting what Emily Thornberry is doing on this. As a country we are not accepting our responsibilities on this. Not accepting our share of refugees. Must ensure overseas development funds are maintained.

Standing up against racism, this is incredibly important. I undertook meeting with Police and Crime Commissioner, because important that anyone suffers hate crime gets support they need. Issues that Sarah Champion raised, I felt if I commented on her comments it would fan the media story around this. We shouldn’t let police and others off the hook and should recognise that criminals were responsible.

There is lots of Islamophobia around at the moment, sadly it has been fuelled by the referendum. The community in Oxford has poured cold water upon this. As the Labour Party, we need to work hard to ensure we have a strong front against this.

Damian Haywood

What did you think about Louise Richardson’s comments about homophobia?

Anneliese Dodds MP

Have not seen academic’s comments – obviously it is negative if students have this to report. This was treated as just another opinion rather than as something much more harmful than that. Obviously I do not agree with the Vice Chancellor on this.

Jane Darke

Interested to hear about your initiatives to improve tax avoidance. Congratulations for being on the front bench. Will you be able to continue that work in this role?

Anneliese Dodds MP

Yes, treasury team very supportive of that work. Finance Bill would have been great opportunity to deal with companies not paying tax that was due, as well as non-dom issues. We are seeing HMRC being cut back, we are becoming somewhere where people come to wash their money. Shadow chancellor and others do want to do something about this.

Chris Bond

Is there anything you can do given terrible ending to pensions dispute at BMW where company used the position of ending contracts. Have not seen this since Wapping. What this means is if you go on dispute, you can be blackmailed into going back into work at any time. Law needs to be changed. Probably when Labour are in power.

Tiago Corais

What should the strategy be for Labour Party to fight against vision of rules on immigration? Lots of jobs are outside of rules - one example is nurses.

James O’Donoghue

One bedroom flat Barton costs £300k, we are only getting a small proportion of social housing, we should not have let the builders get away with that.

Anneliese Dodds MP (responding to all)

Pensions – I regretted what had happened as well, and there was an enormous amount of sympathy from people in Oxford. People expected proper support in retirement. Current situation is difficult to escape out of given the current legislation. Some hope Brexit discussions provide an opportunity to do that, but we will have to push very hard for that, it will not be given to us. Happy to work with you on this, and share the specifics with the Labour front bench.

Very concerned about Government position on immigration. We need people right across economy from overseas to do jobs here in Oxford. Government’s approach is very disturbing. I have been dealing with immigration issues for people in my new role as an MP, it would be a nightmare if the system was extended to cover people from EU as well. Need to work hard on it as a party.

Barton, can’t go into specifics as is Council issue but I think one general problem, is that it is getting harder and harder to apply conditions on developers when building new schemes. Generally, Oxford’s requirement is much higher than neighbouring authorities.

1. **Fundraising collection** £238.31 was collected.
2. **Annual conference 2017**
3. **Women’s conference arrangements committee**.

Ann Black - Women’s conference in process of developing into something more powerful. Women GC delegates can nominate candidates for Women’s CAC, and ballot papers were distributed.

Ann would inform the delegates of decisions relating to conference business, as Lotte was held up in traffic and Cherry was unwell.

1. **Contemporary resolutions for conference.** The meeting was asked to debate each motion and vote for or against, and then vote to decide which motions out of those agreed, should be submitted for conference.
2. **Ending UK support for Saudi Arabia**, proposed by John Tanner and Stephen Marks

Conference notes:

1. On 9 August the UN Children's Fund reported that airstrikes in Yemen in 2017 already exceeded the total for all 2016, with the monthly average almost three times higher; and that there are over one million internally displaced people in Yemen.

2. On 11 August ten Nobel Peace Prize winners appealed to the Saudi authorities against the revelation that it is about to put to death 14 men arrested in protests in 2012. The letter reported that the condemned men, primarily young, had been tortured into making confessions that were afterwards retracted.

Conference believes:

1. That by continuing to licence arms exports to Saudi Arabia the Conservative government is complicit in the bombing of Yemen and the killing of more than 10,000 people.

2. That in its attempt to secure further arms deals the Conservative government mutes its criticism of human rights violations within Saudi Arabia including the use of the death penalty, the execution of minors and the flogging of those calling for freedom of expression.

Conference resolves:

1. That the next Labour government should impose an embargo on the export of military equipment to Saudi Arabia.

2. To do everything possible to campaign for human rights in Saudi Arabia and to support those working for them.

3. To work with trade unions to create a Shadow Defence Diversification Agency so that practical plans are in place to use the skills of those currently working in the arms industry on socially-useful projects such as renewable energy.

The motion was overwhelmingly carried with no votes against.

1. **A publicly owned banking system**, proposed by Lucas Bertholdi-Saad and Tom Zagoria (formally seconded at meeting)

Conference notes that on 3 August 2017 Bank of England governor Mark Carney warned about the UK returning to the light-touch banking regulation that produced the financial crisis.

We note the revelation on 8 August that the “turnaround plans” of British banks including Barclays and RBS are being hindered by ongoing US Department of Justice investigations into their role in sparking the crisis.

The banks were to blame for the crisis, not the money Labour spent on Sure Start centres, schools and hospitals. Yet they were bailed out at public expense, to the tune of at least £800bn.

It is intolerable that when banks fail working-class people should suffer austerity to prop them up so they can continue as before.

We must ensure that such private interests are not again allowed to obstruct meeting the needs of our people. We therefore applaud and adopt the policy adopted by the TUC at the initiative of the FBU in 2012, to nationalise the banks and create a “publicly owned banking service, democratically and accountably managed... [to] play a central role in building a sustainable economy, investing in transport, green industries, housing, creating jobs and assisting recovery in the interests of working people”.

Ownership matters because we need democratic control: you can’t control what you don’t own.

Conference resolves that the next Labour government should bring at least the five largest retail banks into 100pc democratic public ownership to establish the kind of system described above.

The motion was carried by 33 for,18 against 23 abstentions.

1. **NHS and Accountable Care System**, proposed by Liz Peretz and Bill Mackeith

Conference notes:

* That NHS Accountable Care System contracts announced on 7 August impose a basis for 44+ local bodies to replace England’s NHS, bypassing Parliamentary debate and legislative process.
* On 9 August, the House of Commons Library revealed a doubling of NHS sites proposed for sale, 117 of which currently provide clinical services.

Accountable Care Systems, like their US counterparts, would provide limited services on restricted budgets, replacing many NHS hospitals with deskilled community units.  This would further damage indicators such life expectancy, already stalled since 2010. Both the ACSs and the asset sell-off serve to deliver the Five Year Forward View currently being implemented via ‘Sustainability and Transformation Programmes.

Conference reaffirms its manifesto commitment to restore our NHS by reversing its privatization, repealing the Health and Social Care Act, and halting Sustainability and Transformation Programmes.

We call on the Party to oppose and reverse:

* funding cuts (raising funding to Western European levels);
* the sell-off of NHS sites (more beds are needed according to the Nuffield Trist, not less); and
* Five Year Forward View policy which:
	+ facilitates Accountable Care Systems, which should be rejected;
	+ replaces 7500 GP surgeries with 1500 “superhubs”;
	+ downskills clinical staff;
	+ reclassifies NHS services as means-tested “social care”; and
	+ cements the private sector’s role as Accountable Care System “partners” and as combined health/social care service providers.

Conference reaffirms Party policy to restore our fully-funded, comprehensive, universal, publicly-provided and owned NHS without user charges, as per the NHS Bill (2016-17).

The motion was carried overwhelmingly with no votes against.

A vote was taken on which motions to send to conference. Everybody has two votes and two motions will go forward to conference. NHS (Oxford West) and Saudi Arabia (Oxford East) motions were supported by the meeting.

Proposers should be in touch with delegates to brief them on the motions.

Nominations for Teresa Clark (Lewisham West and Penge CLP) and Jean Crocker (Gateshead CLP) for the Women’s Conference Arrangements Committee were overwhelmingly supported by women GC delegates from both CLPs. Conference delegates would be asked to vote for them.

1. **National constitutional committee election**. Both constituencies nominated Anna Dyer and Emina Ibrahim at the AGM, and delegates are asked to cast their votes for these two candidates at conference.
2. **Constitutional amendments**. A summary of proposed rule changes from the NEC and from CLPs has been circulated to members. Members invited to debate and vote on these.

Mark Ladbroke

Moves procedural motion - propose this is left to delegates.

This was agreed by the meeting.

Jane Darke – thanks to Ann Black for her work in preparing the positions.

1. **Motion – Hate Crimes proposed by Jamila Azad, East Oxford branch** and formally seconded.

"The Oxford & District Labour Party calls upon Government to toughen punishments for hate crimes in particular Islamophobia incidents and racism, which has increased in Oxfordshire by more than 40% in a year. Over a 12 month period from April 2015 to 2016, the number of hate crimes reported were 398 in Oxfordshire, compared to 623 in the 13 months of April 2016 to May 2017.

We urge Government to review of hate crime legislation and bring back Commission of Racial Equality who should be given authority to investigate hate crime cases. This type of crime has no place in a civilised society."

The motion was carried overwhelmingly.

1. **Executive committee.** The minutes of the meeting on 19 July 2017 have been circulated to members. These were accepted.
2. **Future meetings.** These were noted as **Friday 13 October 2017** (Rose Hill community centre, including conference reports), **Thursday 9 / Friday 10 November, Friday 8 / Thursday 14 December 2017.** Further dates, venues and topics to be arranged.