

Young Labour National Committee Minutes

Date: 11 th March 2014
Time: 6pm
Location: One Brewers Green, London, SW1 0RH

Present: Simon Darvill (Chair), Bex Bailey, Simon Evans, Hazel Nolan, Callum Munro, Sam Woodcock, Emma Meehan, James Hallwood, Conrad Landin, Benjamin Butterworth, Max Shanly, Jeevan Jones, Greg East, Catherine Rendle, Jack Falkingham, Jack Storry, Sachin Patel, Victoria Rigby.

Apologies: Kate Taylor, Helena Dollimore, Fergie Naeem, Ben Abrams, Sophie MacDonald, Kieran Roberts, Rida Vaquas, Siobhan Foy, Michelle Collins, Mhairi Threlfall, Alex Halligan, Rachel Hodson, Caroline Hill.

Permanent Secretary: Dean Carlin, National Youth Officer

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, including the new Women's Officer Beth Miller whom he wished good luck in her new role.

2. Apologies

The Chair then informed the committee of apologies sent in by fellow members who were unable to attend (see above).

3. Update on individual workplans

Members then updated the committee on progress with their individual workplans.

4. Youth Conference Review

The Chair thanked committee members who attended and helped facilitate what was a successful Youth Conference. Feedback forms had been sent out to all those who attended and while there would be an opportunity for the committee to fully review the feedback and event at the next meeting, he opened it up to some initial feedback from committee members.

Hazel Nolan asked that all feedback forms be held confidentially. The National Youth Officer confirmed that all feedback was confidential and that personal details were only asked for verification purposes.

Max Shanly said he felt the event had been a great success. He did however feel that the main conference room was too narrow which meant it was difficult for those sitting at the back to keep up with that was going on. He also said that while he thought the policy workshops were a great way for members to discuss policy in a more informal environment, there needed to be

a way for members to feedback their views on issues that they might not know enough about to write a full motion.

Jack Falkingham said that he felt the event was very well organised and in particular that the new liberation drop-in sessions worked really well. However that the majority of the LGBT caucus had raised complaints about the manner in which, the debate on the Collins Review had been held and the behaviour of certain groups and individuals during that debate. This behaviour and the resulting general atmosphere during that debate made many members feel extremely uncomfortable and therefore the debate was inaccessible to those members.

Simon Evans echoed these comments and said members in the Disabled Members caucus had raised the same issues. He called for the Code of Conduct to be more rigorously enforced.

Beth Miller asked if there was a way that members who did feel this way could be contacted to let them know we are aware of the issues and are looking at ways to ensure it can be robustly dealt with in future as this might help to encourage them to come back to events.

The National Youth Officer said that while a record number of complaints had been made, they were largely focused on that individual's overall experience of the debate and they were generally reluctant to identify specific individuals who behaved in an unacceptable manner. The Labour Party does have robust process for dealing with issues of bullying and harassment but it required individuals to first make a specific complaint against an individual.

Hazel Nolan agreed that the Collins Review debate was inaccessible, however felt that the debates on the Sunday were significantly better and proved that the process the committee agreed worked. She did however feel that codified standing orders and a secret ballot could have helped avoid this situation again. She also wanted to see the enforcement of a safe space policy extended to social media.

The Chair said that he felt new rules were not needed as the debates on the Sunday used the same rules and were conducted in a much more accessible environment once the existing rules were better explained.

The National Youth Officer clarified that a secret ballot could have been held had the committee requested one at any point before hand.

Sachin Patel said that he felt the atmosphere was largely a result of the contentious nature of the issue being discussed and was mainly confined to the vote at the end

Sam Woodcock said he and others he had spoken to found the whole debate inaccessible and overly aggressive.

Callum Munro said that there was no excuse for the behaviour exhibited by certain individuals and groups. Those individuals need to start to take responsibility for their actions.

Jack Falkingham asked the Chair and NEC Youth Representative to look into ways to improve communication on these issues to the wider membership rather than just those at Conference.

5. National Campaign Days

The National Youth Officer updated the committee on progress organising National Campaign Days each month. Young Labour will be hosting a series of monthly campaign

days in key seats across the country in 2014. The key seats are being chosen by the relevant Regional Offices and the dates in conjunction with the key seat organiser. We had a tremendously successful day earlier in the month in Reading West with over 50 young members out campaigning for our candidate, Victoria Groulef.

The days currently confirmed are:

- [Wirral West \(North West\) - 5&6 April 2014](#)
- [Thurrock \(Eastern\) - 17 & 18 May 2014](#)
- [Redcar \(North\) - 21 & 22 June 2014](#)

All committee members were encouraged to attend.

6. IUSY

Hazel Nolan said that she had found out through Irish Labour Youth that someone who holds no position in and indeed is no longer even a member of Young Labour was acting as the Young Labour delegate to an IUSY Congress in Copenhagen without the knowledge of the committee. The Young Labour National Committee agreed to take this forward with IUSY and report back to the next meeting.

7. AOB

The committee agreed to the publication of the minutes of the last meeting on 22nd January 2014.

The committee held a one minute silence in memory of RMT General Secretary Bob Crow who recently passed away.