

**YL Exec 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2020**

## **Apologies**

### **Age Range Changes – Alex**

Document sent round written to give to mark giving a background, steps already taken, and strategy. Needs exec approval so Alex and Tara can take it to Mark

JW asks Can we set it below 1p? can we set it at zero

[ACTION POINT] Guy will look into if we can do it for free

JW says we know the tory age range, do we know labour

AH says I believe it's 25 but their system is really comparable as it's split (labour students don't need to be members). Leave out the fact that the current exec is a good balance of students/graduates/young professionals. Will send to regional chairs (English Party)

JW is against mandating regional chairs to have officers, tried last year and feedback as that they want flexibility to choose how many roles and what works for their regions – support for federal yl

AH responds not mandating it, just recommending it, they don't have to take us up

FC consults constitution – people 25-30 have to opt in, they should pay a subscription fee determined by the exec and opt in lapses after one year

AH says that it'll be overwritten once we change federal party constitution

JW asks about a strategy to advertise – is it comms or mem dev, should we be trying to email our members every month or so, should we be writing lib dem voice articles?

AH thinks this should come after we talk to mark

TC asks do we have a view on the minimum age

AH responds with responses: abstain, barely passed, and then general membership was 60someodd% against

TC asks if it is worth trying to formalise some of the things we do in practice to being official

JB suggests we should probably do that separately

FC is not sure it's wise to take it separately, its gonna take a hell of a lot of effort to go through the process again to try and get a minimum age sorted when we want to do it again, we could just do it all together and vote in parts

AH replies that the issue becomes that we might not pass the motion if we amend it because we need 2/3 majority – we should do it without the minimum age because no one has a mandate, we haven't spoken to our membership, and people are clearly not in favour at the moment, this motion was about making our organisation better for young professionals

FC says we shouldn't formalise minimum age at conference, we should leave that to the events officer and conference committee

AH thinks it is not fair for us to mandate on the staff member their legal obligations

JW reminds us of the whole consultation with Sal, yes we get the up to 30s but an associated membership for those above 30 who are still students and those under 16

AH disagrees with the sentiment saying no, Sal was keen on having a minimum age because it would deal with a lot of our welfare issues, but Sal is not president anymore

JW responds if this is going to be one of the redlines for the powers that be, we shouldn't take it off the table yet, I think Finn is correct that we should do it now or not do it all

AH suggests we present the documents to mark, but we don't take the minimum age off the table but we don't put it in, if he insists on a minimum age then we take it back and we won't have it ready for Brighton

KM suggests that Chessie needs to guide us on the welfare rules and the law, it might be safer for us to put it in the constitution as well as the law it may be good idea

CF explains if your under 18, we don't take responsibility, I'm there if anything happens to support, but fundamentally anyone under 18 I don't take legal responsibility, I'm not DBS checked so I can't be legally responsible, they're not transferable even though I've had them for a school in Somerset, at the moment in legal responsibility, I shouldn't have one

KM says under 16s probably shouldn't really be coming to our weekend conferences, and under 18s without accommodation works better for social aspects as people will drink, we didn't want parents coming because they might be people we don't want at conference for various reasons

KM asks if we can put the minimum age on the agenda for another meeting

CMc asks would it be worth having a working group?

JB reminds us that realistically we have to pass it at conference, not a massive amount of time between activate and deadlines for autumn conf

JW suggests we could get it ready and really sell it to conf

AH & JB both say it'll be more controversial

Working group – Alex, Kathy, Chessie, cat. Michael

Moved to vote, passed by all present

### **Paddy Ashdown Forum – Tara**

TC says she had a conversation the Paddy Ashdown Forum, a centre-left think tank, with proposal to organise series of meetings. On 30/03/2020 they are hosting a debate at the National Liberal Club, which they have invited us to be a part of. The motion will be something like 'political parties are of no interest to young people,' with a view to arguing that young people would rather campaign on issues than ideologies. They wanted YL speaker for each side of the debate, ideally not elected politicians (i.e. councillors). Layla Moran or Isobel Parasram mooted as moderators. Traditional Oxford-style debate. Free for us to attend and run.

JW, FC express views in favour

TC says we should we send a trusted person or open up to the general membership

CMc says would be against attending, as the Paddy Ashdown Forum set up by ELF who have been difficult to work with in the past.

TC says she will produce a list of potential speakers, reach out to find out who's interested [ACTION POINT – TC to produce this list by Wednesday]

GB asks if we want to advertise the event to our membership

There is general agreement

DS says he is happy to send an email

FC points out that we don't necessarily need two people from opposite sides of the debate – it is perfectly possible to argue for a position with which one disagrees

[ACTION POINT - TC to get definite number of debaters]

### **Pastoral Officer – Tara**

TC was contacted by Amanda (new pastoral officer) who was interested in coming to our meeting in March. She is very keen on working with us. She hoped to come to Activate, but Tara suggested to her that that was not the best idea – puts everyone in an uncomfortable position, especially given CF has welfare responsibility at

Conference. Amanda suggested putting her details on our federal conference leaflets.

There was general agreement with this last point.

[ACTION POINT – MC to liaise with Amanda to get her details on the conference leaflets]

CF says she is working on creating welfare policy for the federal party to be put on website so people know what to expect/is expected, signpost pathways for support, what to do if... etc.

DS says he is happy to put that on the YL website

GB asks if we should include Amanda's contact details on the next bulletin

General agreement

[ACTION POINT – DS to include Amanda's contact details on the next bulletin]

TC asks if DS is OK with restarting monthly bulletin emails

DS says he is, provided he gets nationbuilder set up sooner rather than later. He is happy to receive any items for those newsletters

FC asks what contact details we will be putting on

CF says [pastoralcareofficer@libdems.org.uk](mailto:pastoralcareofficer@libdems.org.uk), phone number

FC raises concerns that we don't want her phone to be ringing 24/7, email should be sufficient

CF says it might be best to give her work number to the exec only

JW asks if Amanda works full-time

CF says she does

JW says she has a heightened role under new disciplinary system

CF agrees

JB asks if we could add that the exec will put members in contact with Amanda if necessary

GB says we could we just ask what she wants

TC reiterates that she's very keen to be involved

CMc says it's a very good thing that she's keen to be involved

CF says that Amanda had no prior connections within the party. Her background is in welfare roles for different charities so has no preconceptions about YL

### **FPDC – Tara**

TC says she was contacted by Mary Regnier-Wilson, who's putting together the FPDC committee, was part of the FB elections we had a while ago. 6 people elected to Federal Board, state and SAO reps, with a focus on training and membership. 4x formal meetings, plus additional informal meetings. Last year was Charlie Kingsbury.

DS says he sat on some meetings as co-chair last term, but that there was a lack of communication in latter six months

FC agrees that he'd had a similar experience as chair

TC says that the rep is normally the chair of AO/SAO. Asks if the exec is OK with TC as our rep.

General agreement

TC appointed YL's rep to FPDC

### **12:05 LUNCH**

### **YL Outreach – Alex**

AH says Greg is very happy to sit down and chat about membership engagement, we don't currently have a strategy and we should definitely have one, between campaigns, comms, Alex, accessibility, Guy and Chessie to help. London and Newcastle – mini activates not confirmed (April time back to back weekends of the same weekend, could be linked with canvassing for. New members days not in London, maybe somewhere else like Manchester or Nottingham. We need to have some sort of working document and strategy on how to engage our membership.

FC says a big chunk of local elections in the north west – mini activates are training days or new members days would be good to do this up there

TC explains idea behind new members day was because she had good experience with new members day, happy to have it wherever Alex sees fit

GB says Eleanor's dad is the mayoral candidate for Manchester so would be very good

AH informs us that Lancaster south lakes greater Manchester accredited

DS says getting new members to go out canvas immediately is not a great way to engage

AH clarifies mini activates are not new member specific

AH & KM discuss possibility of coffee social?

TC implores that exec needs to go to these socials

KM suggests maybe doing an icebreaker to really ensure that new members feel involved instead of just talking about yl jargon things

FC says we need to ensure that exec members don't just gossip about yl stuff

JB suggests activate quiz night

FC reminds us that in the unofficial yl group chat we need to still be aware of our behaviour

TC says we need to remember that we are the face of yl and we need to ensure we remember this when at conferences and engaging with others

KM suggests the ice breaker thing should be planned for sure

JW suggests the idea of splitting off into four groups of policy, organisation, etc.

JB says the mock policy debate worked quite well, doing stuff like that

GB agrees that another mock debate would be could be really good

[ACTION POINT] Coffee social – Alex, Guy, Michael

North west new members day – late July/early august

### **ERASMUS – Callum, Alex**

AH says it is going well, 13 branches have requested packs, probably don't need 25, only 15 so we can save some money, get packs to people by the end of February, Layla keen to work with us on it, she'll promote the petition, would be good if we can get her to do a video, want to get it sorted and ready by the end of meeting

TC asks what are we doing if other societies want packs (and pay for them)

AH responds there's not been a lot of interest in them from the forum post so having two extra should be enough

TC asks How long is the campaign running

AH responds until Erasmus is solved politically?

CL via messenger says basically just waiting for Layla to sign off her quote for the leaflet and HQ Campaigns to give feedback on it. As soon as I get that I'm throwing it all to Finn to order and to Guy to sort packing.

FC asks who you asked to get Layla's quote?

CL via messenger says someone got in touch from her office about the campaign – Jack something? Don't have his email to hand.

### **Co-options – Tara**

TC welcomes Dan and our newly-filled diversity committee. She says that the anonymous confirmation process worked well, resulting in the largest number of applicants ever for any co-option. This suggests that it is less intimidating when the process is anonymous, and that this can be seen in variety and quality of applications received, so having names redacted overall good for engagement in the co-option process.

TC notes that there were a couple of issues with formatting, and suggests that typeform is not the way forward. Instead, applicants will write an application, which will allow for inclusion of artwork/portfolio. CF to redact names before sending on to the exec. Keep stock questions as guides: experience, plans for role, etc, option to add supplementary questions.

JW disagrees with TC in terms of anonymity. He argues the process wasn't anonymous, and that there were obvious indicators as to who some applicants were.

KM disagreed with JW, saying she did not correctly identify applicants.

CF says that this is about giving confidence in applying; the purpose is not necessarily for applicants to be anonymous to exec members

JW adds that, because he couldn't work out who the majority of applicants were, he didn't feel comfortable preferencing them over folk who could be identified. Anonymity makes it difficult to judge applicants on their track record. It is not unreasonable to say that we should be able to put people onto the exec in the same way the electorate put us here.

AH says he is concerned that the exec did not see the ages of the applicants, as he feels it may not be responsible for the exec to appoint under 18s to certain positions for the purposes of ensuring their wellbeing. The impression he got was that a large number of the applicants were under 18, and some possibly under 16. He is not sure whether they should be given a public-facing role like Communications Officer.

TC notes additionally that there are some positions that cannot, constitutionally, be filled by under 18s

CF says she did ask for dates of birth but redacted them before sending the applications to the exec.

CMcC suggests having a question as to whether they're over or under 18

TC responds to JW's point: anonymity is more about encouraging people to apply, people will be identifiable, but that's always going to be the way. How people voted with that information is a personal choice for them. It's about the system being fairer for new applicants.

JW thinks it's unfairer for new people, because we co-opted DS, who we knew

FC says it's possible to try not to let the fact that you knew who it was to influence your vote

DS says he agrees with CF and TC on anonymity, his relevant experience revealed who he was. Something more free-flow than a typeform would be useful, particularly for roles that need graphic design and helps exec make an informed decision. Not unfair to ask for date of birth, could be relevant information

CMc says that she approves of anonymity, even though there are kinks to work out. For roles like comms, being adult is important because of the abuse the YL account can get online. It's very high scale in terms of followers and therefore the abuse can be worse. It might be worth putting a line in to make sure people are aware of the realities of the role and the amount of abuse that is received. We don't want to damage people's mental health.

GB disagrees on anonymity, and agrees with JW (this has never happened before). He wants to be able to use other information than the application to judge why someone might or might not be suitable for a role. Being on the exec is a public role. They will also have to run for a non-anonymous election campaign if they run for re-election.

CMc asks if it would be possible in future, if someone had a credible reason why someone might be unsuitable, that could be passed to CF, who could decide whether to remove the person from the running

CF reiterates that as Returning Officer, she should receive any concerns with any candidate. She adds that job applications are done anonymously until the interview stage

GB points out that for an actual job, you will eventually be interviewed

JW argues that this is a public facing role and is not a job, so it is a fallacy to compare the two

TC says that it is more intimidating to put yourself forward to a group of 15 individuals than the whole YL electorate, for some people. Close scrutiny of applications. The difference in number of applications goes to this.

JB agrees with AH, the overwhelming impression was how many were at sixth form level or below. He suggests that we should possibly revisit having an 18 age threshold for all exec positions. He says he identified those who he could identify and then ranked those four or five people. If non-anonymous, he would be able to look into people's social media and forum posts, be much more willing to consider people without previous exec experience. Anonymity made him more cautious. Even though we had the anonymous process, we co-opted DS, who is a former chair.

FC says that he preferred the anonymous thing, and suggests that if we're trying to mimic a job application we could change to a two-tiered process, producing a shortlist from the anonymous applicants, whose names would then be revealed to the exec before a final vote.

JB takes FC's point, but argues that the reality of the way the process was set up led him to be unwilling to consider someone he couldn't identify

TC points out that on non-anonymous co-options some people vote just on name, and on either system there will be that sort of voter bias. This is something that we can mitigate with anonymity.

KM says that she really likes FC's idea of a two-tiered process. People can change and mature and failure to recognise this is not good for our image. Having people who have disagreed with past execs on the exec might mitigate these arguments.

DS says that it is a lot easier to get rid of a problematic employee than exec member. So in essence it's good that we're encouraging more people to step forward and that FC's idea is a good one. Possibly get CF to run 'background check' like checking social media.

CF points out that checks on social media would therefore have to be applied to people running in elections. It is done for PPCs, but cannot really be expanded to all SAOs checking all candidates for elections.

GB likes FC's idea, would be comfortable preferencing people he can't identify in the first round. Would also mean that first round can be kept as a typeform.

JB also likes FC's idea. Responds to KM's point: co-opting someone onto the exec is the wrong way to let someone redeem themselves.

JW says that the cost was £10 per person for a social media audit

TC and AH point out that for comms, that would be £220

TC is happy to trial FC's idea, hopefully we've reached a happy medium. There is no formal process for (most) co options (except BAME Officer). If we trial this and it works really well, we could formalise it a bit more. The constitution is vague on this process.

CMc says that it would be nice to have a longer voting period if we have so many candidates again.

TC is happy for some flexibility to be introduced to the voting length

AH raises concerns about the exec not being consulted on the changes to the co-option process before the email went out

CF says she made an honest mistake

TC apologises for the confusion

FC notes that the constitution is currently very unclear, the RO just 'does their thing' and if we want more oversight, they'll need to be amended, but because election regs are part of the constitution, this would have to go to conference.

TC sums up that: there should be better communication; future co-options should be a two-tier process

CF adds that there should be a written record of how it has been done so future execs know what to do.

[ACTION POINT – TC and CF to ensure that future co-options take place under FC's suggested 'two-tier' process]

[ACTION POINT – CF to make a written record of this decision for future execs]

### ***BAME Officer***

TC says she and CF gave Chris Annous a lot of slack to design how the co-option was to work. CF sent the applications to him and LDCRE in the same way. Chris sent TC an email to say thanks for the support and that he thinks the nominee will be a good addition to the executive. This is the first time we have run the process. Because this is a constitutional provision, we need to amend the constitution (especially as it seems that it might contravene the Equalities Act 2010, in its requirement that White British and White Irish people not apply). Chris suggests that CF might be mistaken because being BAME is an occupational requirement.

GB points out that being BAME might not be an occupational requirement.

AH says that if the process is unlawful, we should not proceed.

JB says that we should be able to ignore the provision of the constitution that breaks the law, but that we should be clear that we're not following that bit of the constitution.

Chris Annous is invited to call in

Chris Annous says he's not a legal expert, but the legislation gives scope for an occupational requirement if that characteristic is a necessary requirement for meeting and fulfilling the obligations of the role. He argues that because the BAME Officer needs to represent the experiences of BAME people, this is just such a requirement.

DS says that if Chris is right, he would want to hear that from a legal expert.

CF contacted the head of HR for HQ, an expert on recruitment policy. They both agree that YL will need to draft a job description and potentially change the title as this would leave us open to claim of discrimination. She suggests changing the wording to encourage BAME applicants in particular. This is used in all party job descriptions.

JW asks if we included the requirement for not being White British or White Irish in the emails and typeform

TC and CF said no

AH argues that even if it was taken out of the emails and typeform, it is still in the constitution and that it's better to spend two weeks rerunning the cooption

CF says that the typeform did ask for ethnicity for constitutional reasons

CMc agrees with AH, and adds that we need a process where somebody has to read the amendment so that this doesn't slip by again – she assumes that this was done because the discussion took place in good faith

FC points out that if something in the constitution contravenes UK law, we can reasonably ignore that provision; and that he's not quite clear why it's against the law.

CF says that the particular reason is that it specifies races that cannot apply, and that this is a grey area.

Chris Annous says that it would be nice if CF could ask specifically if this counts as an occupational requirement. He also doesn't see why we have to rerun the co-option

because we haven't discriminated against anyone during the co-option process. It would be farcical if the BAME Officer was white.

JB says that we could vote to reject any nominee who wasn't BAME. There's a question of this co-option and future co-options. Because the current wording specifies two specific groups of white people who can't run, that's a problem in itself. Since this (probably) breaks the law, he expects that the membership would be OK with us re-running the co-option, explicitly disapplying that part of the constitution. It would be a good idea for Policy Committee and the Policy Officer to run amendments past HQ.

TC says we either have to amend the constitution as interim because if we rerun it we face the same issue, or we have no BAME Officer until Activate. She also sees no reason why we can't co-opt the BAME Officer in the same manner and the other new co-options.

FC says we, as an exec, cannot amend the constitution, even on an interim basis.

AH says:

1. The danger for us is being taken to court, **even if we would win**, because it would be very damaging image-wise
2. We can explicitly disapply the constitution from a future co-option
3. It seems unlikely the exec would approve a white BAME Officer

JW compares the YUSU and Labour Party processes, which both say that candidates must identify as BAME. This is not the same wording as the YL constitution but this seems to work for other organisations.

Chris Annous leaves

FC proposes a four point plan:

1. Put the co-option on hold while we seek legal advice
2. If co-option is legal, get on with it
3. If not, re-run the co-option
4. Amend the constitution

JB agrees with FC. In response to JW, there is a difference between saying that someone needs to identify as BAME, and saying that they can't be White British or White Irish.

TC asks if anyone takes issue with FC's plan

KM points out there is a diversity committee BAME Representative who we could take to exec in the meantime

CMc says that he would probably be very happy to come along

AH points out that Chris Annous is still technically BAME Officer so BAME people are not without representation on the exec, so long as Chris is aware that he is still BAME Officer.

CMc says it would be a good idea to invite the diversity committee rep as well

AH agrees

TC sums up: we are adopting Finn's plan. If the co-option was illegal, we can trial the new co-option system. In the interim, Chris will still attend Exec meetings and Raj will be invited to attend as well.

### **3.50 Officer Reports – All**

TC apologises that the documentation was late but says it's been a hell week. She invites any questions from officers to each other.

JW asks TC what the outcome of the overall strategy for the board was. TC replies that it is to elect more LDs through building capacity and building appeal. Use technology better. Improve internal communication, reduce duplication and replication of work. Learning from each other, professionalising as a board, two way communication. Deploy resources to the best effect.

JW asks TC what the 10% donations cap was. TC replies that this for the leadership candidates, for their campaign fund.

TC notes that she will redact her FB and James' FPC reports before they go on the website.

FC asks how the reports will be published. TC replies that they will be on the website. FC asks if he can make the reports consistent in format.

CMc says that we have to pay IFLRY fees this week or we can't send delegates. We have already missed and IFLRY thing this year and we haven't sent delegates for two years.

CF outlines her new process for paying invoices, which is more efficient.

CMc will open up delegate applications for the second conference to the membership, but doesn't want to do this if there is no time to approve their funding

FC asks if finance can pay something on a day that isn't Thursday

CF says yes

FC says that the IFLRY invoices from 2017 and 2018 need to be paid on Monday, and they need to be paid before IFLRY will send us the 2019 invoice. LYMEC has definitely been paid.

[ACTION POINT – FC and CF to ensure that all invoices are paid this week]

CMc says that Junge Liberale are doing an event in Oxford. They have fully paid accommodation and want some Young Liberals, CMc says we should send at least some exec members. JL want some additional speakers, including ex-MEPs. The dates are 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> March. Wera might be good.

FC has Wera's secretary's email.

CMc says we could have former Labour and Tory MPs who defected to us

DS says we should be careful about asking MPs who might be running for leader to events.

CMc points out that the event is officially run by JL, so it doesn't matter

[ACTION POINT - CMc to email the entire exec so people can check with diaries]

CMc says it clashes with our exec meeting but that if we go as guests we should go for the whole weekend

TC asks if we can keep it within committees and regional chairs

CMc says she was thinking of doing applications

TC says that is not a good idea, it would make a lot of work for CMc and open it to a smaller pool

CMc says she was going to do it slowly, opening it to gradually more people

JW asks if the event was going to be in English or German

CMc says English

GB asks if CMc has an agenda

CMc says no, she has a theme and a couple of ideas of things they want to do

CMc says we have three delegates to LYMEC, plus Huw James who has been elected in his own right, so those will be filled by international committee.

## **AOB**

**Exec Regs – Tara, Scott Emery**

Scott Emery talks us through the changes he has made to the executive regulations as a code of conduct for officers. He makes a suggested edit to 4.3 to reflect the correct title, and to update so that the Welfare Officer is no longer responsible for complaints, because this is not the way things are.

There is general agreement.

We move to a vote. Scott's proposal passes unanimously.

### **Jack - Nationbuilder**

JW was talking with Callum about NB for regional chairs. JW hasn't had that list and wants it. Luke Jeffrey needs the D and C list asap.

TC doesn't know how to do this but will learn how to do it as soon as she can.

FC says that most of our discussions about NB access are immaterial because we can just get people to sign agreements not to abuse the data they have access to.

AH points out that he **still** doesn't have the access he needs

[ACTION POINT TC and DS to talk on Sunday morning and work out access for those who need it]

### **Finn – Tickets for Summer Conference**

FC asks what's happening in re. tickets for Summer Conference. We have sorted access for Spring, and will use the same process for Summer. We have a venue and accommodation.

[ACTION POINT DS to publish comms about the access fund for Spring]

[ACTION POINT TC to liaise MC on tickets for Summer Conference]

JW feeds back from Conference Committee

[ACTION POINT GB to message MC to ask if Siobhan needs chasing]

### **Jack – Regional Parties Committee Chair**

JW proposes we enter closed business. CF is admitted to closed business.

Closed business ends.

### **Campaigns Officer Resignation**

Callum James Littlemore has resigned. His responsibilities will be passed to GB until the co-option takes place, which will be done under the new system, and not started until next week.

**Close of meeting**