

High Peak Liberal Democrats

Constituency Executive Meeting

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 14th
December 2010**

at

The Old Park Horse, Chapel-en-le-Frith

1 Apologies: Beth Atkins, Ray Atkins, Roy Lyon Brian Musgrave.

2 Minutes of the previous meeting:

The Minutes of the previous meeting, held on October 27th, 2010 were approved, with the following significant amendments:

Item X iii) to be altered to read, 'It was noted that local parties need to engage with the referendum and that Shirley Holt would organise the agreed campaign in non held wards and the referendum campaign'.

Penultimate Action Point on last page also amended to read, 'Organise the agreed campaign in non held wards and the referendum campaign'.

With these changes the Minutes were unanimously approved.

3 Matters arising: None

4 Treasurer's Report:

The constituency balance on 24/11/2010 was reported to be £1200.

Alistair Stevens reported that he was holding £351.24, the proceeds of events held in New Mills and Hope Valley earlier in the year. Alistair agreed to deposit £175.62 into the North Branch and Constituency accounts immediately.

The detailed accounts paperwork from Bob Hobson was passed to Laurie Barlow.

5 RISO printer:

Brian Musgrave had emailed the following summary of the current position relating to the printer:

- “(a) There is nothing in the Agreement providing for the hirer to purchase the equipment either during or at the end of the term. It is expressly stated that on the expiry of the term the equipment shall be returned and rentals shall continue until such time as it is returned. Of course, there is nothing to prevent the parties arriving at an agreement for the sale/purchase of the equipment if they both agree on a price.
- (b) However, the Agreement also envisages that, notwithstanding the end of the term, the hirer may continue hiring indefinitely until the hirer gives at least one month's written notice of termination.

I have obtained the following figures from Bank of Scotland

- (i) The current arrears are £730.54, including interest and charges. This represents two quarterly payments of £330.03 plus interest and charges of £70.48. Barrie has agreed to let me have a cheque for payment to Bank of Scotland to cover this and the Executive has sufficient funds to reimburse him.
- (ii) The total amount still to be paid over the remainder of the term is £2,178.52. I do not see how they arrive at this figure. If one takes the current figure of £730.54 and adds four more instalments of £330.03 one comes to a figure of £2,050.66. Adding the increase in VAT to the four remaining instalments brings a further £28.09 only.
- (iii) The settlement figure for getting out of the Agreement altogether at this stage is £2,063.96, which is valid until the 17th February (the next instalment falls due on the 18th February). This is a saving of £114.56 over the figure in (ii) above.

All the above figures have been given to me over the phone and I do not know how they are arrived at.

I have been told very clearly by Bank of Scotland that the supplier will not be interested in discussing possible terms for purchase of the equipment until the term of hire has come to an end and all payments due have actually been made.

The owner of the equipment is stated in the Agreement to be C.F. Asset Finance Limited, but the supplier is stated to be Inplant Print Supplies Limited, STACEY HOUSE, BUSHEY HALL DRIVE, WATFORD WD23 2QF, telephone number: 0845 370 5370.

I am today writing to Inplant Print Supplies Limited to see if I can get any useful information out of them. I will report if I have any response worth reporting between now and the next meeting."

Following discussion it was agreed that:

- The payment of £730.54 covering the arrears made by Barrie Taylor will be reimbursed to him immediately from the Constituency Account. (Action: Laurie Barlow)
- Future payments of £330.03 (or the amount required if different) will be made quarterly prior to each due date (next payment due on February 18th, 2011) to avoid further penalty charges.
- It was decided not to make full payment immediately, at the settlement amount shown in (iii) above, but to clear the outstanding debt.
- It was further agreed that we should continue with the Maintenance Contract until further notice at a sum of £364 per annum, but using the Monthly Payment option.
- It was also agreed to investigate the insurance position to ensure that the machine is fully covered on the current policy, particularly as the machine is now stored at the Liberal Hall where security may be an issue.

Barrie Taylor agreed to circulate an ALDC document advising on setting up a Printing Society for operation of a constituency printer, and a draft constitution for such a club, which is one possibility. The Executive will need to agree how the printer is to be managed now that we have acquired it and approve estimates of income and expenditure which will need to be prepared. Barrie also confirmed that the printer is in good working order, the folder works reasonably well but not perfectly.

6 Discussion of the revised draft pre-election strategy and budget for 2011.

Due to time constraints detailed discussion of this important item was held over to the next meeting.

Shirley Holt had circulated an amended strategy/Budget document and stressed the need for urgent agreement.

In general it was agreed that we should be targeting the 6 held wards plus Padfield.

7 Membership Secretary's report.

Shirley Holt reported a total membership of 109 - this included one new member, Graham Hewitt, who was welcomed to the meeting, and one who had moved out, Samuel Macdonald.

8 Rules for new elected councillors

Clarification had been requested on the rules which come into force at the election in May 2011. It was confirmed that:

- The standard levy is 5%.
- Exemptions apply for those councillors in receipt of benefits/pensions which may be affected by the allowance they receive as councillors. The circumstances of each councillor to be determined on a 'case by case' basis.

9 Liberal Hall

Brian Musgrave reported as follows:

"We now have the outcome of the meeting between our Planning Consultant and the High Peak Planning Official. This is not encouraging. The Hall is in a conservation area and it appears to be a priority that it should not be demolished. At the same time, there seem to be concerns about impact upon other residential premises in the locality and difficulties with vehicular access. Further, "it may be considered that the building contributes to a community facility and that policy CF2 would apply".

There is a question mark over whether it might not be better to look at some sympathetic redevelopment involving conversion of the entirety of the buildings on site (i.e. including the Police Station), with possible loss of the more modern flat roof areas at the front of the Police building. Obviously this would involve ongoing negotiations with the Police Authority and would depend upon how they view the need for having a Police Station in New Mills at all.

The Trustees need to consider if there is anyway forward, but I am now inclining to the view that the Hall may well have to remain a "white elephant" and we may now have to spend some money on essential repairs and upgrading, especially with regard to the leaking roof."

Following discussion it was agreed that:

- A detailed estimate should be obtained ASAP of the repairs required and the likely cost.
- Investigate the possible sale of the Liberal Hall and obtain a free valuation. (Mike Harrison offered to approach a local agent [a personal friend] to see whether a free valuation can be obtained.) This was agreed.
- This matter should then be raised with the New Trustees to agree the best way forward.

10 The desirability of holding a regional conference in Buxton on October 2012.

With regard to the Regional Conference it was agreed in principle that we would be happy to host the regional conference in Buxton in autumn 2012, subject to finding a suitable location.

11 Executive Committee membership.

Alistair Stevens was unanimously elected as vice-chairman of the Executive Committee.

12 Any Other Business.

There was a brief discussion of Candidate Approval, and Jane Simm was appointed to the Approval Panel.

Barrie Taylor also agreed to consult further on whether a formal interview was necessary in every case. (His aim is to have an official response before the next meeting. There is nothing specific in the Constitution or in the guidance, which stresses maximum flexibility for constituencies.)

13 Date of Next Meeting.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 11th, 2011 at the Old Pack Horse, Chapel en le Frith commencing at 8.00pm.

Future meetings in 2011 will take place on the second Tuesday of each month (excluding August and December).

Action	Responsible	Time scale
Deposit the proceeds of events held in New Mills and Hope Valley earlier in the year into the North Branch and Constituency accounts.	Alistair Stevens	Immediately
Reimbursement of £730.54, the RISO arrears, to Barrie Taylor	Laurie Barlow	Immediately
Circulate an ALDC document advising on setting up a Printing Society for operation of a constituency printer.	Barrie Taylor	11 th January, 2011
Agenda next meeting: "Discussion of the revised draft pre-election strategy and budget for 2011".	Roy Lyon	11 th January, 2011
Investigate the possible sale of the Liberal Hall and obtain a free valuation.	Mike Harrison	11 th January, 2011
Candidate Approval - consult further on whether a formal interview was necessary in every case.	Barrie Taylor	11 th January, 2011