

High Peak Liberal Democrats
Constituency Executive Meeting

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 20th January 2010

at

New Inn, Chapel-en-le-Frith

PART ONE

1. Present

Beth Atkins, Ray Atkins, Graham Boardman, Alan Debes, Mike Harrison, Bob Hobson, Shirley Holt, Glynn Jennings, David Lomax, Roy Lyon, Alistair Stevens, Ann Strudwick, Geoff Strudwick, Barrie Taylor.

2. Apologies

Brian Musgrave, Steve Sharp

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was proposed by Bob Hobson and seconded by Barrie Taylor that the minutes of the meeting held on 18th November, 2009 be accepted. This was carried unanimously.

4. Matters Arising

- i. It was noted that Brian Musgrave is in the process of arranging a meeting of the Liberal Hall Trustees. It was proposed by Mike Harrison and seconded by Bob Hobson that it be recommended to the Trustees that cost quotations be obtained before commitment is made to any necessary action. This was passed unanimously.
- ii. It was noted that no action has, as yet, been taken to arrange a 'Race Evening'.

5. Executive Committee composition

It was noted that formal proposals were required from both the North and South branches as to their nominees for the Executive Committee. It was agreed that the proposals would be tabled at the next meeting.

6. Membership Approval

- i. It was noted that the Executive Committee should formally receive and approve all new members of the constituency party. S Hales Jozefczyk, B Murray and S Harrison were formally received and approved.
- ii. It was reported that the Constituency currently has 92 members, 77 of whom are voting members.
- iii. It was reported that the Constituency currently has 15 junior members. It was agreed that there should be a focus upon developing junior membership, particularly at the Buxton campus of Derby University, and that the Chair would liaise with the Membership Development Officer to develop a strategy.
- iv. It was reported that the Membership Development Officer had written to the 40 lapsed members with the aim of reactivating their interest and membership.

7. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported:

- i. A bank balance of £2000.
- ii. That to date, the response to the general election appeal had generated £185.
- iii. '200 Club' – that there are only 5 members. Executive Committee members were asked actively to promote the Club.
- iv. That the North branch accounts needed to be submitted.

8. County Council Report

County Councillors Atkins and Taylor reported:

- i. Budget proposals are awaited and that 'cuts' are likely.
- ii. A series of 'scrutiny committees' is being developed by the controlling group.
- iii. That an exercise to complete the 'Single Status' requirements had been commenced and that there had been a detrimental impact upon staff morale.
- iv. Concern in relation to the development of the Home Help service and the potential impact on the most vulnerable members of the community of government requirements that individuals receive a sum of money to spend to meet their personal needs. Concern was expressed that the changes will

undermine the Home Help infrastructure and that once lost it will be impossible to restore.

- v. That there is to be no increase this year in DCC pensions.
- vi. A range of views on the CC's recent response to the adverse weather conditions. It was agreed that there was a need to reflect on how the situation had been managed and that both County Council and Borough Council members could prompt a debate on how a similar situation might be better managed in the future. It was proposed by Ray Atkins and seconded by Mike Harrison that the Executive write to staff responsible for the CC emergency plan advocating that the appropriateness of the current plan to the needs of the most vulnerable members of the community be further considered.

9. Borough Council Report

Borough Councillors Atkins, Harrison and Lomax reported as follows:

- i. Uncertainty exists as to whether the BC contract to clear town centre snow had been terminated by the CC. Cllr. Atkins has asked for an explanation at the next Environment Committee. He has also requested confirmation of the grading of roads in relation to gritting.
- ii. The possibility of requesting that an Area Forum be set up to discuss gritting during the recent adverse weather was noted.
- iii. The Council meeting held on 15th December 2009 had discussed:
 - a. The forthcoming budget. The medium term financial strategy seems to be based upon potential expenditure 'cuts' of between 0% and 5%. Concern had been expressed that planning was not taking sufficient notice of the scale of potential financial constraints.
 - b. A joint committee has been established to generate a marketing strategy.
 - c. A recorded vote had been held on the impact of a criminal conviction on an application for a taxi license.
 - d. The Development Plan. There remains uncertainty as to the number of houses that are to be allowed and it is not clear that sufficient attention is being given to the infrastructure needed to service planned housing development. The two areas for development were noted as Harpur Hill in Buxton and near the High School in Chapel-en-le-Frith.
 - e. A possible reduction of policing in the High Peak from three to two divisions. It was noted that there is to be a police consultation meeting in Buxton in early February.

- iv. Concern was expressed about the state of the car park in New Mills where items for recycling had been dumped due to bins not having been emptied. It was agreed that the terms of the recycling contract should be explored.

10.A.O.B.

- i. It was reported that both the Chapel-en-le-Frith and New Mills town councils had set the 2010 – 2011 budget on the basis of zero growth.
- ii. It was noted that new Liberal Democrat boards were needed prior to the general election and agreed that a quotation should be gained.

11. Date of the Next Meeting

Wednesday, 17th February 2010 at the New Inn, Chapel-en-le-Frith.

(Please note that subsequent to the meeting the chair has agreed to a request to delay the meeting to the 24th February – apologies for any inconvenience caused.)

It was agreed that the Executive Committee would meet on the 3rd Wednesday of each month until after the General Election. The dates being: 17th March, 21st April, 19th May.

PART TWO

12. PPC

- i. A minute from the North Branch AGM held on 19th November 2009 was noted. It was agreed that the minute would be discussed at the next Executive Committee meeting.
- ii. Progress in the appointments process for the PPC was noted.
- iii. **Complaint concerning the election literature**
 - i. The two candidates for PPC left the meeting. Cllr. Harrison took the chair.

- ii. The complaint from Mr. Alistair Macdonald was outlined as was the response of the Returning officer, Cllr. Bob Charlesworth.
- iii. After a lengthy discussion it was proposed by Bob Hobson and seconded by Shirley Holt that the Returning Officer's view that there had been no breach of the rules be endorsed, and that no action be taken. The proposal was carried unanimously

Action Points

| Action | Responsible | Time scale |
|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Arrange meeting of Liberal Hall Trustees | B Musgrave | a.s.a.p. |
| Arrange 'Race Evening' | A Stevens | a.s.a.p. |
| Formal proposals from North and South branches for Executive Committee membership | Respective branch 'chairs' | 24 th February 2010 |
| Student recruitment strategy | Chair/Membership Development Officer | September 2010 |
| 200 Club promotion | All Executive Committee members | a.s.a.p. |
| Submit North Branch accounts | North Branch Treasurer | 24 th February 2010 |
| Write re. emergency planning | Secretary | 24 th February 2010 |
| Write to Returning Officer and A Macdonald re. PPC complaint | Secretary | 24 th February 2010 |