UKIP NEC MINUTES SUNDAY 17th March, 2019
1-30pm start. At the Union Jack Club.

Members present: Gerard Batten (Party Leader) (GB); Kirstan Herriot (Party Chairman) (KH); Mark Harland (Treasurer) (MH), Alan Bown (AB), Elizabeth Jones, (EJ), Marietta King (MK), Donald MacKay (DM), Andrew Moncreiff (AM), Katie Fanning (KF), Piers Wauchope (PW), Paul Oakley (General Secretary) (PJO), Richard Ford (RF), Adam Richardson (AR), Gareth Bennet (GBe), Mike Hookem MEP (MH), Ernie Warrender (EW) Roger Arthur (RA) (Minutes Secretary).

Apologies: Paul Williams, Fiona Mills, Margot Parker, Nathan Ryding, Michelle Brown, Ben Walker.

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

PW pointed out that the Devolution “Common Law Motion” was not adopted. The minutes were otherwise approved.

3. MATTERS ARISING

BW’s matter is to be adjourned to the next meeting.

4. DEVOLUTION

There is strong support for ending of the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly, but in NI the preference is for devolution to Regional Assemblies (Belfast meeting 12th April). GB’s paper refers.

MOTION PROPOSED: Devolved assemblies, for Wales, Scotland and NI, are to be opposed, subject to referenda.

Proposed MMc, seconded RF. For 7. Against 0, Abstained:

5. NEC IN THE MEDIA – BW for next meeting.

6. STRATEGIC POLICY PROPOSAL (by EW)

Purpose: To break through voter complacency. EW cited Blair’s “People’s Petition”, taking a product to customers (voters) once per annum, via a referendum. A Royal Commission would decide the question, based on research. EW to submit paper to NEC.

7. LEADER’S REPORT

UKIP membership has risen above 27,000, plus another 600 new members, but we still need to raise membership to around 40,000 members, to meet projected outgoings. UKIP is now at 6% in opinion polls.

GB has again been very active, including meetings in Strasbourg, Brussels and recently a meeting in Durham, which was well attended.

EU Elections: If MPs do not support the PM’s proposed WAB, when it is presented for a third time, then there could be a long delay in Brexit, with the likelihood that the UK might have to participate in EU elections. Clause 1 of the 2018 Withdrawal Act allows for a short delay to our EU exit, but after 2 years the Act will come into force automatically.
We might need as much as £600k to fight EU elections. The cost of leaflets alone could run to £350k. Any leaflets deliveries should focus on postal voters. Regions will be expected to fund the campaign relating to their area.

With a very short lead time and limited funds, we might make more use of billboards at strategic locations and posters on buses, instead of the usual leaflet drops. Lawrence Web would be project manager for any EU elections.

- 18/04 is the latest date for a decision that the UK is to participate in EU elections.
- By 30/06 EC will decide on whether to agree an Article 50 extension for the UK.
- 07/07 is when the newly elected EU Assembly first sits.

Nigel Farage is unlikely to work with UKIP (to avoid splitting the Brexit vote) and there is little point in attempting to work with him. An objection has been raised against the Brexit Party and AR will circulate a relevant weblink.

**MEP nominations**: The closing date has just passed. In view of the very short time, prospective MEP candidates will be assessed by GB. MP, MH and KH.) MEPs with a poor record, will be excluded). SA will likely be on the list but RF is thought to have health problems, which might count him out.

The assessment panel will score candidates, making recommendations to the NEC. It may consult regions regarding some candidates but the process must be completed by early April.

**UK Elections**: UKIP has 1,300 prospective candidates for the local council elections. Another 100 or so would qualify UKIP for participation in media coverage and interviews. To date, we have 350 PPCs who have passed Assessment. Those who stood in 2015 and 17, do not need to be assessed again.

8. **CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**

**UKIP Leadership Election**: To be deferred until the evolving picture over Brexit, EU elections and Local Elections has emerged. Arrangements are to be decided at the next NEC meeting. PW to draft a paper on the process. £30k including VAT, would need to be budgeted. Result likely to be announced at Conference.

**NEC Elections**: By a similar token, the elections should also be deferred.

MOTION: That NEC Elections be deferred until December. Proposed by RF, seconded by GBe. 4 for, 1 against, 7 abstentions, including those expecting to stand in the NEC Elections.

**By elections**: A Newport by election is to take place early in April, giving some indication of the electorate mood after TMay’s Brexit failure. A Peterborough by election is due early June.

**Branch Mergers**:

MOTION; To approve the branch mergers below: Proposed by KF, 11 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions.

Macclesfield – Tatton/Congleton.
Maidstone/Weald – Mid Kent
Harlow – Broxtowe.
N London – NW London
Branch Operations guide: KH working to complete the guide, including the roles of Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. Branch Accounts to be named a Club, or Association.

9. TREASURER’S REPORT

Refer to spreadsheet hand out by KH.

In the bank: £500k, leaving £175k net of commitments.

Potential Legacies: a. 60k (£37 in so far) and b. £125 to £150k, due 10/06.

MH will include words for a suitable codicil on the web and will circulate hard copies.

Dormant bank accounts are still being pursued. £1,000 released from Oldham.

LJ obtained access to several accounts (before MH became treasurer). To be investigated.

Lexdrum House should hold details of Branch Account, to enable payments to be made directly into them. Details of account signatories should also be on record.

UKIP Trading Ltd (The Shop) has considerable potential as an income earner and it should be registered as a UKIP company and trademarks need to be registered, at £500 per registration.

Sovereign Draw details were handed out by KH, for info and to demonstrate transparency. UKIP owns 80% of the SD, which also has great potential.

Around £50k in legal fees are expected to be returned to the party, out of a possible £54k, following the JC affair.

10. GENERAL SECRETARY’S REPORT

Disciplinary Committee is to be on standby, including the GS and two NEC members.

GB counselled against responding/reacting to unsolicited phone calls from the media, but to ask for the question in writing.

11 PARTY SECRETARY’S REPORT

The Information Commissioner has notified us of an intention to carry out a Data Audit on the Party, but will give notice. (Contact AR for details of potential “personnel” issues.)

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Conference Venue: The Celtic Manor, Newport (just off the M4) is proposed at a cost of £40k plus VAT, for September 27, 28, 29th. Further details available from KH.

13. NEXT MEETING

28th April, 2019, 1pm at the Union Jack Club.