UKIP NEC Meeting Agenda

07/03/20 – 13.00

Union Jack Club, Sandell St, London, SE1 8UJ

1, Attendance

Ian Garbutt (IG), Paul Girvan (PG), Elizabeth Jones (EJ), Marietta King (MK), Donald Mackay (DM), Joel McGuigan (JM), Pat Mountain (PatM), Pete Muswell (PeteM), Freddy Vachha (FV), Ben Walker (BW), Steve Hollis (SH), Neil Hamilton (NH)

Stephen Newton (SN – Minutes taker)
Hoong Wai Cheah (HW - Minutes taker)

Apologies

Paul Williams, Lawrence Webb

New member (SH) was welcomed to the meeting.

2, Approval of Minutes

Proposed by (MK), seconded by (IG) – 7 Votes FOR, 0 Abstentions, 0 Against

3, Matters Arising

Items to be covered later in the agenda.

4, Leaders Report

Management team continue to work extremely hard under great pressure whilst receiving some abuse from a certain section of the membership. (PatM) talked about forthcoming NEC elections and the alterations to the current list of NEC members which has been an affected due to resignations and position-bYES.

NEC elections will take place at the same time as the leadership election, under the control of the returning officer and party chairman (both BW).
5, **Treasurers Report**

The management team continue to work on the potential restructuring and organisation of the party’s administrative functions working within the parameters of the party’s current financial situation. They will report back to the NEC once final arrangements have been made as previously instructed by the NEC.

(NH) continues to work on regaining control of the Sovereign Draw and associated company and rebuilding of the Patron’s Club.

The NEC discussed the current financial status of the party and were advised it was operating firmly in the black!

6, **General Secretary’s Report & EGM Update**

(FV) indicated that not even one compliant*, valid EGM has been held (* including failure to remit the correct initial contribution of £100 per EGM)

If we allow the constitution to be amended by means of an EGM, where just a few members can disproportionately influence matters, disenfranchising postal voters, the 13th Chapter of the constitution has been materially contravened. The process to change the constitution was deliberately made difficult when the constitution was being drafted. The process requires a lot of careful reflection and consideration.

The needed approval (by postal/electronic voting) of two thirds of the members voting if the NEC agrees to the proposed amendments, or if the NEC does not approve of the changes, two-thirds of the entire membership irrespective of how many vote - a higher bar. This is deliberate.

(MK) pointed out that an EGM must only contain one agenda item, and (FV) explained one of the reasons for this was because the outcome of one vote could influence discussion and voting in another.

(BW) advised that the cheques for £100 received from branches for the EGM will not be cashed but destroyed and the branches informed.

7, **Party Secretary’s Report**

(NH) gave an update on the Braine case and other live legal cases.

8, **Chairman’s Report**

(BW) shared some examples of some of the spam which was being received by him by way of letter and email.

Party membership currently stands at 10,400.

A regional meeting was held prior to the NEC meeting which was productive and utilised (PeteM’s) telephone meeting facility. Membership numbers, recruiting, hustings and funding were discussed. RO’s will audit their local social media to identify problematic branches/pages which aren’t following the standard corporate identity of the party and posting against the party’s direction. These will be reported to (BW).

Janice MacKay (RC, Scotland) suggested a 20/20 membership drive in the RO’s meeting which (BW) presented to the NEC meeting which was fully supported by NEC members.

Leaderships applications closed today @ 5pm, (BW) will notify later after vetting, if there is a contest.
Constitution working group is being led by Tomáz Slivnik; they are working through the constitution to investigate suggestions from the membership and areas that need work. They will check the legality and knock on effects of any change. All proposed changes will be reported to the NEC.

The UKIP Tech group has been reformed by (BW) headed up by Rob McWhirter who will be looking at the party website, emails, logos and colours to ensure uniformity throughout our corporate identity.

YI video competition winner from the Newport conference was Joe Simons who won a 1st prize of £250. For whatever reason this hadn’t been paid and (BW) advised it should be and the NEC agreed.

"Members not in good standing" were discussed by the NEC. (FV) and (IG) suggested that this status should not be used anymore of which there was a consensus. The NEC instructed (BW) to investigate the list of members not in good standing and take the appropriate action at his discretion.

Branch social media has started to be audited by (BW) and regional officers. (PeteM) suggested that the technology group should assist with this.

A free speech spokesperson/campaign was discussed, (PatM) is to appoint a spokesperson and work on policy with (PeteM).

9, Policy Report & Head of Policy Appointment

(PeteM) was appointed head of policy. He has been speaking to spokespersons working on various issues and wants to create teams for each policy area. He talked through the some of the current policy ideas for the party’s ‘Living Manifesto’ which would be fleshed out and presented to the NEC in due course.

10, Campaigning Updates

Queries about DNOs are to be made to Robert Stephenson nno@ukip.org

Stephen Hollis has been added to the local campaigning group and will serve as an asset due to his experience as a local councillor.

11, Scotland Update

(DM) advised the meeting that membership issues were also reflected in Scotland and he needed more activists. He wants Scotland to focus on anti-devolution and will look to work with other groups who want the same.

12, Wales Update

(NH) advised that the Welsh UKIP group were making progress on its own anti-devolution policy platform and stance on abolishing the Welsh Assembly. The Brexit party currently oppose devolution after supporting it.

13, Northern Ireland Update

The party continues to be promoted by core members in NI. They continue to open channels on communication with opposing party’s to potentially form strategic alliances. The party is opposed to the NI Assembly.
Any Other Business

The London Assembly elections were discussed.
Currently – in no position to fund Assembly elections
Mayoralty: £10,000 deposit, 5% threshold (no prospect of retaining).
List: £5,000 deposit, 2.5% threshold (little prospect).
Constituency candidate: £1,000 deposit, 5% threshold
- 4 year cycle
- 2 GLA constituencies might be viable: Bexley & Bromley, Redbridge?
London Assembly is pointless. Checks and balances on mayor in theory, but mayoral decisions cannot be overturned unless 2/3rds majority. Never been achieved as it would need Con+Lab consensus.
(EJ) & (IG) and suggested that we put forward one candidate. (FV) suggested the elections might not proceed at all due to the pandemic, which would start causing deaths in the UK very shortly.

Under AOB, (JM) then proposed a motion which involved discontinuance of a party legal action, but did not do so at the time this legal action was being discussed (see 7. above). (IG) pointed out that directors cannot discuss “live” legal actions outside of these meetings, especially on social media. (BW) pointed out that this proposal was ill-judged and misplaced as it should not have featured under AOB especially when legal cases were discussed at great length earlier in the meeting with the facility to ask questions.
(EJ) proposed that (JM) be removed from the NEC, based on suspicion that he had leaked confidential information to groups outside of the NEC.
(FV) stated there was no convincing evidence of this, or if there was, it should be produced and examined before any decision was made. The mistiming of the proposal by (JM) was attributable to (JM)'s nervousness or inexperience.
(IG) sympathised with (EJ)'s position but agreed with (FV) it was premature. (IG) raised a counter proposal that (JM) demonstrates that he is fully aware of his responsibilities as a company director and NEC member at the next meeting.

(FV) reiterated the importance of publishing accounts properly to the electoral commission and to Companies House, and that he would liaise with the auditors.

(IG) proposed a vote of thanks to (BW) for his work after administering and chairing the NEC. It was widely seconded.

Date of next meeting: 4th April (amended later to 9th April)

Ben Walker
Interim National Party Chairman