



Executive Meeting Minutes

26/02/23

Google Meets

In Attendance:

- Janey Little, Interim Chair (**JL**) (she/her)
- Lucas North, Finance Officer (**LN**) (they/them)
- Harvey Jones, Co-Comms Officer (**HJ**) (he/him)
- Caitlin Richardson, Co-Comms Officer (**CR**) (she/her)
- Felix Andrew, Campaigns Officer (**FA**) (he/him)
- Ollie Bradfield, Membership Development Officer (**OB**) (he/him)
- Callum Clark, Co-Branch Development Officer (**CC**) (he/him)
- Emily Baker, Co-Branch Development Officer (**EB**) (she/her)
- Katharine Macy, Events Officer (**KM**) (they/them)
- Rebecca Jones, Policy Officer (**RJ**) (she/her)
- Lucy Tonge, ADS Officer (**LT**) (she/her)
- Aaminah Saleem, REDL Officer (**AS**) (she/they)
- James Green, English Co-Chair (**JG**) (he/him)
- Joe Norris, English Co-Chair (**JN**) (he/him)
- Leo Dempster, Acting Scottish Chair (**LD**) (he/him)
- Alex Hartley, YL Staff Member (**AH**) (he/him)

Also In Attendance:

- James Bliss, Honorary Vice President (**JB**) (he/they)
- Nathan Hunt (**NH**) (he/him) (**took minutes**)
- Sean Bennett (**SB**) (he/him)

- Kai Pischke (**KP**) (he/him)
- Brendan Roberts (**BR**) (he/him)

Apologies:

- Liv Walker, Non-Portfolio Officer (she/her)
- Joe Thomas, Welsh Chair (he/him)

Absent:

- None

Welcome

JL welcomed all to the meeting and thanked non-exec members for attendance. The updated agenda was noted including the new Safeguarding update item. It was noted that scheduled breaks will be included in future agendas.

Apologies

Apologies were received from Liv Walker (Non-Portfolio Officer).

Action Points from the previous meeting

- RJ noted that the Gender Recognition Reform (GRR) motion passed at Reading conference. RJ thanked JG and JN for their help with this.
- LN asked if more Comms could be done surrounding the passing of the GRR motion
 - CR confirmed this would be the case.
- HJ confirmed that there had been Comms output supporting striking workers, and that a tweet supporting striking workers was the top tweet of the month.

Exec Member of the Month and Thank Yous

JL announced Rebecca Jones as Exec Member of the Month for her excellent work at conference.

JL thanked everyone who volunteered at conference, while LN thanked the conference safeguarding team and thanked by-election candidates (on behalf of the returning officer) for running positive campaigns.

Objectives and Strategy

A discussion was held around possible priorities for YL going forwards. JL started the discussion by proposing three priorities with an aim of developing tangible objectives underneath these. These three priorities were:

- Increasing membership engagement
- Championing diversity
- Building up capacity

On diversity, LT said we needed to talk to diverse voices with the same objectives as our own, including local parties, elected representatives and campaigners. The recent case of a LD councillor being the only Lib Dem at a Local Government Association (LGA) Leadership Training weekend for BAME councillors was noted.

LT noted that she has spoken to KM to try and increase use of the diversity Facebook groups and to make people aware of their existence.

KM suggested running an "Ask Her to Stand" style campaign ahead of the YL and LD elections to encourage underrepresented groups to run for roles in YL and the wider party.

NH noted that in the case surrounding the LGA event, the LGA Lib Dem group usually has multiple free spaces for these events but the LGA Lib Dem group are bad at advertising these and people are not usually aware of these opportunities, and therefore YL could signpost eligible people towards these.

LD noted that every SYL member he's spoken to is a white man, and he has set the target of SYL having 5 members attend YL Summer Conference, including at least one woman or BAME member.

FA noted that 25% of Young and Winning funding has gone to BAME candidates and these recipients are all in target seats.

JG said that gender diversity needs to be at the forefront of a diversity strategy as YL's membership traditionally leans heavily male.

The Exec agrees to build a diversity action plan in the future and AS + LT agree to take this away and lead on it.

On engagement, KM notes that they've been speaking to people around how to make conferences more engaging, and they believe that we are in a much better position compared to a few general election cycles ago.

JG suggests we could measure success on this by the number of YLers running in Federal party, English party or Local Government elections.

JL suggests we could include more attendance at events as a target.

HJ declared he would like to do a "meet the exec" series of posts on YL social channels to help widen reach.

JB says he's proposing that Policy Committee set up a Youth Manifesto working group, similar to what has been done in the past (with the exception of 2019, due to a lack of time). LT notes policy campaigns could be very strong at driving engagement by focusing on policy areas important to young people.

RJ says she's very much in favour of the Youth Manifesto and encourages interested Exec members to get in touch with her - she is currently identifying the most popular parts of the Policy Book and hopes to emphasise these in a Youth Manifesto (including diverse policy).

FA said we should focus on policies mainly appealing to young people (Trans Rights, legalisation of weed etc) to drive engagement and data from regional action days could help us target resources.

On building capacity, HJ said they would like to create a formal plan for the eventuality of a snap election to help build capacity. He said he can see all the data from engagement with newsletters and that allows for the tailoring of comms to drive engagement and measure results, and he will work with RJ to push policy awareness in areas that may drive engagement.

The English Co-Chairs (JG and JN) said that YL needs to be a well oiled machine heading into a general election, and pointed towards EYL's preparation for the 2023 Local Elections which currently includes around 30 action days in target areas - they say this is ambitious but that a greater number of in person opportunities to meet and campaign both builds capacity and drives engagement, compared to the current lack of these events.

JL suggested the following draft objectives:

1. More contested elections and a greater diversity of candidates
2. Implement a diversity engagement strategy
3. Increase the number of attendees at YL events (inc. action days, conferences, NMDs, whatever else)
4. Develop an election plan

LN said that 4) should include a focus on Young Candidates, and that YL should encourage YLers to become PPCs (there are currently 10), and that the organisation should identify the 49 YLers who are approved parliamentary candidates but have not yet been selected for a seat and work out how we can help them go for selection.

JG suggests that a continuous safeguarding provision at YL events should be a priority, and suggests "5) Consistent effective safeguarding provision at all YL events" should be included in the list of objectives. This suggestion receives broad support.

JL asks how we could make this objective measurable:

- JG says we could look at the number of safeguarding cases dealt with in an appropriate time frame. SB says we need to be careful around the publishing of data like this, however JG assures SB that this data would be for internal use within the Finance and Resources Committee (FRC) only, would not include case details and no details of cases would be discussed outside of the safeguarding team.
- CC says that this could be measured by ensuring the continued creation of appropriate safeguarding policies.
- SB suggests the ratio of trained safeguarding team members to U18s could be a measurable target, however JG raises concerns with this and says he believes this should not be published widely as this could fluctuate - he however confirms that ratio is at well above an acceptable level.

The Exec voted in favour of the following priorities:

1. More contested elections and a greater diversity of candidates
2. Implementation of a diversity engagement strategy
3. Increase the number of attendees at YL events (incl. action days, conferences, new members days, etc.)
4. Development of an election plan
5. Consistent effective safeguarding provision at all YL events.

JL is to lead discussions on fleshing priorities out into specific actions.

Reading Conference Feedback

KM asked for feedback from Exec members from Reading Conference.

Common themes included:

- It was noted that there was less pressure on attendees to drink, and non-drinkers felt more comfortable at conference, and this was appreciated by members. It was discussed if this could be part of an ongoing culture shift at future conferences.
- On the conference venue/hotel location within town, there were mixed responses. Some members believed that the distance from the town centre was beneficial as it encouraged people to remain in the conference venue social areas and reduced the pressure for attendees to go out and drink. However, some members noted that this distance made it difficult for those members who did want to go out, and there was a lack of food options near the conference venue for lunch and dinner. Members agreed that there is a happy medium that can be achieved and the proposed venues for Newcastle Summer Conference seem to achieve these better.
- On the large rooms, some members commented on the lack of an option to share a room compared to previous conferences and the increased costs on members because of this. LN commented that for Birmingham Conference, 80% of members opted for the higher value rooms and people thought there were too many options available at that conference.
- On Policy, RJ commented that she was disappointed by the lack of policy submitted to conference and the quality of debated policy was lower because of this. Members (including RJ) floated ideas on how to increase the number of policy submissions, including giving people ideas for policies in workshops, reviving diverse policy workshops and possibly running policy events at conferences. RJ set the goal of not having to automatically accept all submitted policies for Newcastle Conference.
- Other comments included: the hotel and venue being the same place was good for accessibility, the separate toilet block was appreciated, breakfast being included was appreciated, the choice of panels and speeches was good.

KM responds to this feedback:

- Agrees with the comments on less pressure to drink.
- Notes that the room situation was what the venue offered and this was cheaper than other providers.
- Reaffirms their commitments at Exec Scrutiny to perform a site visit to the Newcastle venue.
- Agrees with the policy comments - notes that RJ has a diversity plan going forwards but policy training sessions were the victim of a lack of time.

KM read out feedback from two members who attended in person. The key points were similar to above, but additional comments included:

- Board games night was enjoyed.

- Policy motions from the same person should be spread across conference to allow for time for speeches and other items to be prepared.
- Scrutiny did not feel like it scrutinised that much, and the chair could have been harsher on pre-submitted questions. Guidelines for the chair, exec members and the membership would have been appreciated, alongside other scrutiny opportunities outside conferences.
- Members of the exec often hung around each other, however they are human and would often like to be around their friends - an effort could be made to spread pairs of exec members across the room during events.
- A later start would be appreciated to allow for a lie-in.
- Taking advantage of the post-conference hype to hold chair's and aides' training could increase the number of people able to do this at the next conference.

RJ said she was unsure who was chairing EYL business when planning and suggested that training for Federal and English chairs and aides could be merged. JG acknowledged the EYL GM was a learning curve and that EYL item chairs weren't known until the last minute due to constitutional restrictions on who can chair EYL business.

The discussion was ended due to time constraints.

[Break]

Safeguarding Update

The Exec voted to appoint JG as Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Lucas North and Callum Clark as Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL).

The Exec received a presentation from JG around YL's new safeguarding framework, the duties of the DSL and DDSL (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead) and their responsibility to the executive and the new Finance and Resources Committee (FRC). Other information received included information around the Exec's and YL staff member's responsibilities in this process.

[A copy of the presentation shown is available [here](#)]

JL asked how safeguarding fits in with the FRC structure as not everyone needs to know the details of cases. JG reassures that FRC's main goal would be to ensure the safeguarding provision is in place. LN confirms a detailed discussion would not take place in that forum, rather it is the place for "be aware of this" style briefs and allows things to be triaged before sharing things with exec. JG confirms state chairs need to be in the loop to ensure there is appropriate safeguarding at state events.

AH notes that the new safeguarding structure has been looked at and approved by HQ.

Planning for York Conference

A discussion was held around YL's preparations for York Federal Conference:

- KM asked for volunteers to ensure the YL stall is attended to at all times and they confirmed they are aiming to avoid man/man pairings on this.
- KM confirmed after a question from LN that all requested paperwork from the Federal party has been submitted.
- LN confirms the stand will be accepting merch orders so training needs to be provided to people on the stand to show them how to use the card reader - but they'd prefer it if they or AH were on the stand or in the vicinity at almost all times in case they are needed.
- LN noted that the app being used for York conference would be co-branded between the Federal Party and YL, and therefore there is a small risk of people coming to the YL stall to look for technical support.
- Attendees agreed that the Exec needed to encourage members to register for conference (in person or online) as there will some key votes where having many YLers able to vote would be beneficial.
- LN asks if we could get a Focus on YL at Conference printed to distribute at the YL stall - it was agreed that LN and Comms (HJ and CR) would create a draft to share with the Exec.
- JG asked about the possibility of whipping YL members on votes - JB said this could be a good idea, although a similar result could be achieved by YL taking positions on motions (and sharing these in the Focus) but not formally whipping.
- SB asked if we're encouraging YLers to submit speakers cards - KM said priority is often given to first time speakers (which lots of YLers would be) and the Exec can give advice to members on how to increase their chances of being called to speak.
- OB flags the training he's scheduled to deliver at the conference, he will share the timings with KM to share this further.

YL Response to F15 at York Conference

JL noted with concern the proposed constitutional amendment (CA) that is scheduled to be debated in York, which if passed would remove non-binary people from the diversity quotas on Federal Party committees. This is item F15 of the conference agenda.

LT gave an update on the current position of the LGBT+ Lib Dems (Plus). We could support their actions, however if we receive no news from them in the next week we will need to decide a position ourselves.

Multiple Exec members, including JB, KM, LN and LT believed that the Exec should discourage YLers from making speeches on the CA as anyone speaking against the CA could be subjected to an online "pile-on" from the CA's supporters, and the organisation should attempt to protect its members from this.

SB said that someone from YL should make a speech on this CA and they would be happy to put themselves forward for this. Multiple Exec members (including KM and LN) suggest the Exec could choose a suitably experienced speaker to make a speech as any speech will need to be well orchestrated and the speaker will need support behind them.

LN reminds people that while we will need YLers on the floor to vote after the debate, while the debate is ongoing, those not comfortable being on the conference floor are welcome to spend time at the YL stall which is well positioned to quickly get YLers into the hall for the vote.

LT notes that there will be a media presence at the conference and believes that the Executive should advise members not to engage with gender critical people at conference to avoid placing anyone in an uncomfortable position publicly.

BR agrees with previous comments.

Questions arising from Officer Reports

No questions were asked.

AOB

JL proposed opening co-options for a Policy Committee Member (new position), an International Committee Member (position has become vacant) and the Diversity Committee Under 18s Representative role (position has become vacant).

The Exec voted in favour of opening these co-options.

AH confirmed that he would include a co-options notice in the upcoming by-elections results email.

HJ said he has refreshed the old Comms request typeform and that the updated one will be circulated shortly.

The Exec then voted to move into closed business.

ACTIONS:

- **AS + LT to start building a diversity action plan.**
- **RJ to coordinate efforts surrounding a Youth Manifesto working group.**
- **LN and Comms (HJ and CR) to discuss and draft a YL “Focus on York Conference” leaflet.**
- **HJ and others to coordinate efforts surrounding planning for a snap GE.**
- **AH to share by-election results and notify members of co-options opening.**
- **JL to lead discussions on fleshing priorities out into specific actions.**
- **JG and JL to meet to discuss DSL/ Chair delimitation of responsibilities.**
- **LT to feedback Plus’ plans regarding F15 to the Exec.**