

Action points in bold

1 Welcome

and Apologies: Rene Smit, Joe McManners, Katrina Murray

Present: numbers varied as delegates came and left. About 42 including Brian Fisher (BF) Chair, Jean Hardiman Smith (JHS) Secretary, Irene Leonard (IL) Treasurer, Alison Scouller (AS), Tony Beddow (TB), Alex Scott-Samuel (ASS), Jane Roberts (JR), Steve Bedser (SB), Mark Ladbroke (ML), Anya Cook (AC), David Taylor-Gooby (DTG), Sarah Grace Clark (SGC), Jos Bell (JB), Gurinder Joshan Singh (GJS). Coral Jones (CJ), Patrick French (PF), Punita Goodfellow (PG), Carol Ackroyd (CA), Vivien Giladi (VG), Brian Gibbons (BG), Caroline Bedale (CB), Steve Watkins (SW), Peter Mayer (PM), John Lipetz(JL), Corrie Lowry (CL), Judith Varley (JV) These made a contribution but others would be present

2 BF asked for a minute's silence for colleagues, delegates and families bereaved by Covid

3 Minutes of the last meeting and Matter Arising: ASS referred to **Item 10. Maternity Policy development. Agreed the policy should be on the website subject to discussion with Norma Dudley. It was published on 21 February 2020. TB asked for the rules relating to submissions to CC to be circulated**

4 Chair's Report (BF): Three Public Health papers had been discussed with Justin Madders MP + Glenys Thornton MP For a paper on schools, Jonathon Ashworth had invited SHA Officers to join a Zoom meeting and had asked for a Public Health statement with issues for short and longer term policy. **Could we (SHA?) devise a model for how this might be done in future?**

SB congratulated those involved and for the prospects for restoring SHA credibility with the front bench LP and in preparation for the next general election. ML also saw good prospects for the relationship with members and the shadow front bench, and for our role as a critical friend presenting continuing challenge to the government

BF said he would write to Keir Starmer asking for whistle blowing to be taken very seriously and to be vigorous in challenging the government

ASS endorsed the previous comments and **requested that all shadow team briefings be shared with CC delegates on a confidential basis and be on the website** (this has already been agreed with Jonathon Ashworth). **Was the sharing of information with CC for approval or information?**

AC asked that **colleges and education for the disabled should be included in the school policy**

BF asked JHS to scan the database and find delegates with appropriate background knowledge to contribute to specific discussions. JHS said the database of skills, experience and expertise already exists, lists of which members are GPs, which union leads etc. Every recruit is asked about their ability to contribute to specific topics in a democratic and open process involving every member, not

just CC delegates. SB suggested WhatsApp groups are likely to increase so maybe it is necessary to choose the debates to which you want to contribute. SGC also finds e-mails quite intrusive currently and prefers exchange between few people. JR asked for **proper accounts to be available at every CC meeting** and asked why this was a problem. Also, she found the numbers of e-mails overwhelming. Could some guidelines be devised to make them more manageable?

5 Conference and Socialist Society delegates. As the LP Conference had been cancelled no action is needed.

Socialist Societies can have an SHA delegate but this is currently in the gift of the Socialist Society Executive. The current delegate (and SocSoc Treasurer) is Jos Bell. As the AGM has been postponed till 2021, there is no immediate need for action. GJS suggested our delegate should be chosen by democratic on-line election. CJ agreed we should choose our own delegate and the choice should be made BEFORE SocSoc AGM. TB agreed that any organisation can change its delegate at any time. ML said as virtual policy is planned by the NEC, we need to choose OUR own delegate, so we could go ahead with an election. He proposed Coral Jones. SB proposed a range of names be chosen, and the current delegate continues in the interim. JB spoke of her role in SocSoc. She has been Treasurer for 18 months, and had problems changing the Coop account named signatories. She had rescued SocSoc finances and represented women's health and public health on SHA policies. Later in the year, she would welcome a vote, but it seemed inappropriate in lock-down. **Proposal by ASS (seconded by ML and TB: If we have an early election, say within the next 2 months, we should do it with agreement from SocSoc and on the understanding that the SHA delegate would be effective from 2021. The vote was carried 21 for, 16 against**

IL suggested the **criteria for the different roles should be better defined, and reported frequently**

ML agreed with Irene's suggestion; it is especially important as most of the Labour Party is not functioning and unions are not operational. Crises require more democracy, not less. There's huge need for someone to take the fight to the NEC on behalf of those most disadvantaged by the crisis and austerity.

6 Oxfordshire delegates. Their vote had been too late for our CC AGM; could the 2 delegates join CC late? There was dispute about whether this was within the Constitution or not, TB stating that the Constitution was to assist, not impede, activities. How much freedom is there to improvise? PG commented that previously, the NE Region had asked permission to be accepted so already there was precedent of flexibility.

PG: Before the AGM, if you take the constitution, we in the NE (and David Taylor- Gooby will bear this out), we did not hold our meeting in the timescales set out in the Constitution. We had to ask the previous administration whether we could be accepted. We have already had flexibility.... We did not enforce the Constitution. If we had I would not be on CC, and other colleagues from the NE would not be on there either. ASS explained that over half the members of CC were elected unconstitutionally, in terms of their AGM, over the past year, branches had been allowed to be flexible in electing delegates at variable times. Later in the meeting (2.22.25) ASS added that he pointed out that 50% of members of CC were elected unconstitutionally, as the Officers chose to ignore the Constitution. In reply to a question, ASS replied that from memory, the branches involved were: London, West Midlands, Manchester, Yorkshire, and there may be others. Those branches did

not have their elections within the period, despite having been informed by Jean in October/November. He was not suggesting that we rule half CC as being unconstitutional, he was suggesting ruling Oxford constitutional on the same grounds. Further dispute followed and was stopped when **BF ruled that we stick to the rules so Oxfordshire delegates could not be admitted.**

7 Social Care and Policy led by CA. Rescuing Social Care doc. There had been 3 main contributors, many sources, and extended debates. There was agreement that social like health care should be available at point of need and funded by progressive taxation and wide discussion of what social care is for and how it should be delivered with attempts to simplify, recognising that care has been passive and paternalistic in its terminology. Resources always led to high tech solutions, whilst services tailored to individual needs with skilled practitioners are required as in Scandinavia. Some saw this as inflexible and bureaucratic. Some look to co-operative solutions, some think Local Authorities (properly resourced) should be central, though others thought this might be extreme neo-liberalism. Each view had passionate advocates and saw itself as progressive. There was general agreement that government had shown wilful neglect of older, vulnerable, and younger people with needs. She recognised this paper is still at an early stage. Other nations have devolved approaches. **Children's social care needs have not been examined. Pay ratios and personal budgets need particular attention.** VG commented that she would put her concerns in writing. **Public policy was not addressed**, the Law interprets the law not policy, and more precision was needed. ASS recalled that over half the members of the group were elected circumstantially because of the General Election. **Conflicts of interest re social care need to be declared and personal budgets were totally unacceptable as they contravened the basic principles of the SHA.** BG recognised that social care delivery was unfit for purpose, foresaw an evolutionary process with key aspects like the transfer of social care staff to the public service on the national living wage. She would like to see a Universal Direct Payment scheme. Accepting the need for further developments, VG proposed the document be accepted in principle. JHS doesn't like the document, suggested a Universal Independence Payment would lead to a servant economy and objected to the label 'disabled people'. Nor was the document cradle to grave. TB questioned the 2% investment figure and its source. He asked for a detailed case study to see how it worked in practice, specifically the relative merits of direct payments v. independent living costs. SW said social care should be part of the NHS; they should be indistinguishable, with staff appropriately skilled and trained. He suggested the NHS was too centralised and professional, registration too rigid and proposed a new Beveridge Review, to be undertaken by a co-operative body accountable to local people and health and social care becoming a cooperative industry. CB saw the document overall as a work in progress but suggested social care needs should be kept separate for the moment. Consideration of an individual's needs and how they should be accurately assessed was essential and some interim way of bringing social care from the private to the public sector. Personal budgets have been disastrous. No-one is given a budget in health services and told to find their own practitioners; a co-operative co-ordinated approach is needed. She suggested pay should be a Trade Union matter, not something for us. JR wants a nationalised system but cautioned that in the past, Local Authorities, were better resourced and could offer better training. There are problems with direct payments, burdensome for some though those with sharp elbows felt they had more control. Ideally it should

be a partnership. Citizen advocates had been useful in Camden and could play a role in improving wellbeing if some charges were levied. PM agreed with Jane. There is evidence that younger people are better treated by direct payments. He was unsure how the different agencies would work to achieve agreement and suggested a working party to look at outcomes. PG referred to demographic changes in the next 10 years and the 20% of the population not on-line must be included. How many people manage direct payments in practice? She had found it a nightmare with her mother's claim, even knowing the system. Too many people are left inadequately supported so the policy needed equality proofing. The government never followed policies and recommendations without it being linked to demographics and being there as of right. Direct payments get in the way. She suggested a draft paper with more contributions.

CA responded. She had worked in health and social care, managing frail and disabled people, including with family members. She accepted Jean's comments and agreed with the transfer of staff to the public sector. She had managed personal budgets for her son and disliked and rejected them, but it was difficult to incorporate the different individual needs. The Independent Living Fund had gone but it had suited many younger disabled people. Co-operatives, or not-for-profits grants may provide a solution if they prove socially worthwhile but all finances following Covid will be difficult with pre-Covid projections irrelevant, and the infrastructure of both health and social care needing urgent public investment. JL suggested a small group of lawyers with practical experience of social care might draft a national Social Care Bill but with view to its implementation locally. Discussion around the merits of personal budgets v direct payments followed and TB suggested a proper case study would be useful – how, where, when, who did what and for whom + democratic accountability. **BF suggested that overall, the paper was acceptable in principle but as a work in progress, not a final version.**

The vote was against including personal budgets in the doc.

The vote for transfer of social care staff to public service was passed with 1 abstention

JL raised the issue of a draft bill on social care and support including a lawyer. Carol agreed in principle, but legal advice was required as it was a complex and expensive business, and SB commented that content is our concern not drafting legislation. Perhaps we could get help from a *pro bono* lawyer.

A vote for getting *pro bono* legal advice was against - 13 for and 14 against with 1 abstention

A vote to include children's needs was passed with 1 abstention

A vote to accept the policy paper on social care and carers, once the changes were made to personal budgets and transfer of social care staff to public service, was passed by a large majority.

A vote on whether to join KONP's Campaign for a National Care Service (2020-05-18 NCSS v 7 Social Care Campaign) was passed 21 for, 3 abstentions

The meeting was closed at 16.15 without discussion of 5 items on the original agenda: Constitution for a Limited Company – progress to date, Reports from branches (for mutual interest and learning + wider engagement), Treasurer's Report, Secretary's Report, Motions and AOB

No date was fixed for the next meeting

Judith Varley 5.6.20