

NCG Meeting Minutes

Date: Saturday 5 March 2022

Time: 10:00am – 11:50pm

Present: Sonali Bhattacharyya, Matt Buckley, Alan Gibbons, Barry Gray, Shona Jemphrey, Rory MacLean, Mick Moore, Ana Oppenheim, Jackie Owen, Mish Rahman, Andrew Scattergood, Liz Smith, Gaya Sriskanthan and Carol Turner.

Apologies: Solma Ahmed, Craig Andersen, Abbie Clark, Phil Clarke, Sarah Doyle, Leigh Drennan, Jennifer Forbes, Deborah Hermanns, Emine Ibrahim, Tony Kearns, Harriet Protheroe-Solanti, Jon Trickett, Sam Tarry and Matt Wrack.

Staff: Andrew Dolan, Ollie Hill, Hareem Ghani.

Apologies (5 minutes, 10:05 – 10:10)

- CA, AC, TK and HPS have sent their apologies. SJ will be arriving late.
- GS relays TH has stepped back from Labour, and therefore the NCG.
- GS welcomes FD, FO and AS to the organisation, and bids farewell to CD.

Co-chair Reports – Andrew Scattergood and Gaya Sriskanthan (35 minutes, 10:10 – 10:45)

- AS says that the negotiations for the NCG have effectively concluded: four candidates were agreed, but there was a stalemate regarding the fifth candidate since there were reservations about particular candidates. It was suggested that the CLGA should revisit the slate numbers to reach consensus, Momentum objected to this. Thereafter, a number of organisations in the CLGA released a slate of seven candidates.
- AS says that if the negotiations were to reconvene, Momentum would welcome it.
- GS says that she has been finalising the community wealth building toolkit, planning a wealth building training for councillors, and piloting said training for 13 March 2022.
- GS also states that the Climate Committee received 40 applications. She is currently reviewing the applications and developing a syllabus of climate justice political education. The first event will be hosted in April 2022.

Political Coordinator Report – Andrew Dolan (10:45 – 10:50)

- AD says Momentum is in the process of finalising candidates for the Member Communications and Growth Officer and the Trade Unionists Network Organiser roles.
- AD says Momentum launched the YL and LS slates and intends to host training day on 20 March 2022 on skills training, team building and political education.
- Momentum have also been working on local election campaign days in Hull, Sheffield, Westminster and Worthing to organise members and build support for socialist candidates.
- AD says he is receiving mixed reports regarding councillor selections, many councils have blocked left candidates while others have selected a left majority.
- AD relays that the organising team is continuing to work on selections by focusing on 15 seats.
- AD says the week commencing 7 March 2022 will mark the start of the NEC councillor elections.

Policy Primary Recommendations for Members – Ana Oppenheim(15 minutes, 10:50 – 11:05)

- AD says the NCG should make recommendations on priority areas for the Policy Primary.

- GS asks for the NCG suggestions: AD suggests the rightward shift on social issues including crime, immigration and policing. SB agrees with AD suggestions, says Momentum must highlight the interconnected nature of these issues, and explain to its members that the Government is pushing these measures to suppress dissent.
- GS says DM has previously recommended that Momentum should campaign against the undemocratic shift within the Labour Party. AD responds that Momentum will be restricted in what rule changes it can bring to conference this year because of the 'three conference rule', which means that a section of the rulebook cannot be amended until three conference have passed since it was last amended, with the exception of rule changes initiated by the NEC, often under the direction of the leadership.
- AD also states that Momentum is running a process alongside the Policy Primary to source suggestions from members as to what rule changes we should campaign for, and a Rule Change Working Group will collect and amend these, and then circulate those motions to members.
- GS says that Momentum should encourage its members to submit motions on the cost of living crisis. RM agrees, and suggests using the Policy Primary to collaborate with 'soft left' individuals on unifying issues.
- GS says climate change continues to be a unifying issue, and it can be linked to the energy issue.
- GS says it is important to focus on trade union rights. RM agrees and says this will be a powerful way to activate the trade unionist network once it launches. AD says the trade union law is the best way to advance industrial action, which is all the more important following Covid-19. He also outlines that this is a policy area that right-wing unions are also committed to. AS says it is imperative for people to be informed about trade union rights and how it links to climate justice (for example, FBU members cannot take industrial action in regards to climate issues).
- BG leaves the meeting.
- GS asks if the NCG are happy with the four policy issues outlined in the discussion, all attendees agree. The key priority areas for the Policy Primary are as follows:
 - a) The rightward drift in crime, immigration and policing (social issues);
 - b) Climate change;
 - c) Trade union organising, and;
 - d) The cost of living and cost of energy crisis.

Solidarity with Ukraine: All Refugees Welcome – Gaya Sriskanthan (15 minutes, 11:05 – 11:20)

- AO introduces the second agenda item on the invasion of Ukraine, solidarity with Ukrainian refugees and the failure of the Labour Party and the Conservative Party to open its borders to refugees. She says it is important for Momentum to pressure the Labour Party to express solidarity with all refugees fleeing war.
- CT supports AO's resolution, and asks to add the following resolution: "Recognises that the only lasting solution to this conflict lies in de-escalation to allow political dialogue, negotiations, and mediation to take place." She says that Labour CND is circulating an emergency resolution on Ukraine for the Women's Conference. AS and GS support CT's resolution
- SJ joins the meeting.
- AS thanks Momentum's communication team for their intervention on the invasion of Ukraine, especially AS. AS proposes that Momentum should challenge racist and divisive narratives that seek to differentiate white refugees from non-white refugees. Lastly, he says this presents an opportunity for Momentum to garner support for refugees.
- SB echoes with AS' comments about the vilification of black and brown refugees, she says the way for Momentum must focus on safe passage for all refugees and highlights

that the Racial Justice Network is interested in material ways to support migrants. She suggests working with local groups to campaign against immigration detention.

- SB also says she is deeply concerned about the way in which anti-imperialist sentiment has been denigrated in the public. It is vital for Momentum to develop a strategy on this.
- GS' calls for CT's resolution be integrated into the motion, there are no objections.

Labour Party and Free Speech (23 minutes, 11:20 – 11:43)

- GS introduces the third agenda item on the cynical exploitation of the invasion of Ukraine by the Labour leadership to vilify SCG. She says that it is imperative for Momentum to support the anti-war movement.
- AD says Momentum has already begun producing material on the establishment's attempts to stifle the anti-war movement. He asks what outputs the NGC members would like to see emerging from the organisation.
- MB highlights the recent attack on YL via the removal of access to their social media, the slashing of their funding and the removal of the annual youth conference over their statement on Ukraine. This is particularly concerning because YL is not whipped, unlike MPs.
- CT says it is important to stop the attack on the anti-war movement, particularly STW. However, Momentum must be careful not to create a situation that encourages members to resign or be suspended. LS and GS echo CT's sentiment. LS points out that this is an attempt by the Labour Leadership to distance itself from JC and Corbynite politics. SB responds that she sympathises with CT's concerns, but Momentum must outline that anti-war voices are legitimate.
- AO adds that Momentum's communications must centre victims of war: the Ukrainian people and refugees more broadly. SB agrees.
- AD says he will work alongside the communications team to develop a core script centring the Ukrainian people and refugees, and add a supplementary line on anti-war views.
- CT adds that Momentum could use historical references to emphasise anti-imperialism is rooted in the Labour Party. LS agrees. She expresses concern about the rightward shift in global politics, Germany's 100 billion commitment to arms and Switzerland's decision to step out of neutrality. She says this mirroring the Arms Race.
- GS proposes that AD work alongside the communications team to synthesise this discussions into a communications plan. She calls for a vote, there are no objections.

Endorsements for NEC Councillor Positions – Andrew Dolan (3 minutes, 11:43– 11:46)

- AD introduces the final agenda item on Momentum endorsing AA and MW for the NEC councillor positions.
- Momentum ran an application process for these roles, but received no applications.
- Momentum also called councillors to scope out interest, but there was a very low appetite within the left to run for these positions because the seats are unwinnable as the right have the majority and councillors are anxious about selection or deselection. He says there were talks of PD standing, but this did not materialise.
- AD concludes that AA and MW are the only viable candidates, it is unlikely they will win, but the election will present an opportunity for Momentum to expand its councillor network.
- GS calls for a vote on endorsing AA and NW, there are no objections.

AOB (5 minutes, 11:46 – 11:48)

- JO asks Momentum to develop content for IWD on the impact of war on women. AD responds that Momentum has primarily been boosting the Women's Strike on its social media, but will produce content on Ukraine. He asks JO to forward him some lines.

Meeting Ends (11:48)