



South Norfolk Liberal Democrats			
Executive Meeting			
Date / Time	Tuesday 4th June 2019 at 7.30pm		
Venue:	The Mill Centre, Hempnall		
MINUTES			
Members	<p>Officers: <i>President</i> – Jenny Pitchford; <i>Chair</i> – Chris Brown; <i>Vice Chairs</i> – Trevor Wenman, Bob McClenning; <i>Data Officer</i> – Richard Carden; <i>Secretary</i> – Tom Williamson; <i>Treasurer</i> – Richard Scoggins; <i>Membership Development Officer</i> – Tom Williamson <i>Designated Nominating Officer</i> – John Peterson assisted by Richard Carden. Directly elected members: Sean Morgan Branch Reps: <i>Costessey</i> – Sharon Blundell, Dan Burrill; <i>Central</i> – Trevor Lewis, Ian Mortimer <i>Mid Norfolk</i> – Julian Halls, Suzanne Nuri; <i>North West</i> – John Peterson, Jacky Sutton; <i>Two Rivers</i> – David Traube, <i>Waveney Valley</i> – Julian Green; David Bingham. SNDC Group – Chris Brown; NCC Group – Tim East.</p>		
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Attendees</p> <p><i>Central</i> - Jenny Pitchford, Bob McClenning, Trevor Lewis, Des Fulcher</p> <p><i>North West</i> - Huw Sayer, Shirley Hagger – acting Secretary</p> <p><i>Two Rivers</i> – Trevor Wenman, Belle Harris, Brian Norman</p> <p><i>Waveney Valley</i> - Chris Brown, Richard Carden, Julian Green</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p><i>Costessey</i> – Dan Burrill</p> <p><i>Mid Norfolk</i> - Julian Halls, Suzanne Nuri-Nixon</p> <p><i>North West</i> – Jacky Sutton</p> <p>John Peterson is recovering from liver cancer and a minor stroke</p> <p><i>Two Rivers</i> - Tom Williamson, Richard Scoggins, David Traube</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Attendees</p> <p><i>Central</i> - Jenny Pitchford, Bob McClenning, Trevor Lewis, Des Fulcher</p> <p><i>North West</i> - Huw Sayer, Shirley Hagger – acting Secretary</p> <p><i>Two Rivers</i> – Trevor Wenman, Belle Harris, Brian Norman</p> <p><i>Waveney Valley</i> - Chris Brown, Richard Carden, Julian Green</p>	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p><i>Costessey</i> – Dan Burrill</p> <p><i>Mid Norfolk</i> - Julian Halls, Suzanne Nuri-Nixon</p> <p><i>North West</i> – Jacky Sutton</p> <p>John Peterson is recovering from liver cancer and a minor stroke</p> <p><i>Two Rivers</i> - Tom Williamson, Richard Scoggins, David Traube</p>
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1	Minutes of Exec Meeting Held on 26th March 2019 Agreed.		
2	Matters Arising not itemised below None.		
3	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>Email, 16 May, from Neil White – Political assistant to Lib Dem County Councillors Group, requesting details of our planned Exec meetings. Councillors Dan Roper and Steffan Aquarone would like to attend one to discuss preparations for the 2021 County elections. They could not manage this 4 June meeting; future dates to be forwarded by secretary.</p>		
4	<p>Treasurer’s Report</p> <p>RS’s report was circulated by email yesterday.</p> <p>RC explained that apparently, at the Regional Conference last September, it had been agreed to ask for contributions from Local Parties to the European elections (if they took place) of £5 per member. This had been forgotten but SN’s cheque* has now been sent.</p> <p>Current account balance as at 01/05/2019 - £9963.82</p> <p>With District election costs of £1925.58, EE of £1640* and hall fee of £17.50, balance will</p>		

reduce to £6380.74.

Savings account balance as at 05/03/2019 – £94.12.

BM – as it turned out, £3,500 for both elections – money well invested.

5

Fund Raising: Should Branch Organisations have own Funds?

It has become difficult for branches to arrange or change bank accounts.

Two branches, Costessey and Waveney Valley, have regular meetings and their own bank accounts. Former Henstead branch did have bank accounts but changing these to one for the new Central branch has met with unreasonable bank administrative conditions. Henstead bank accounts are now closed. Jenny currently holds the £100 transferred from Henstead to Central but is seeking advice on the way forward.

(Bob mentioned his £1 a month account which he holds with a view to it being for local LD campaigns. He would like to transfer signatories to younger members.)

Huw – proposed monies held in South Norfolk Local Party bank account, with branch amounts being individually recorded.

TL – supports this suggestion, and also mentioned that parishes are having similar problems with arranging bank accounts. There are 2 issues: branches, and branch bank accounts.

JG – is WV treasurer but also a chartered accountant. Numbers, and ages, of members prepared to be branch officers have to be considered.

Chris – from experiences prior to coming to Norfolk, branch organisations worked well.

RC – WV inherited from former Harleston (East Depwade) branch a regular donations account.

Brian – from his experiences prior to Norfolk, funds were raised locally during the year to pay for regular communications with local electorate.

Shirley mentioned that NW branch (formerly Humbleyard) operated a petty cash system. She accepted that amounts involved would not cover a literature campaign - as Jenny pointed out.

Belle – mentioned several, good fundraising ideas. At CB's request, she to send him her notes for distribution across Exec.

Des – agreed that fundraising is a challenge, but that, as we engage more with people, they will in turn contribute more. He has his own unique (fireworks) activity to offer. Perhaps all would work better collectively, across whole LP.

JG – 3 different things being discussed: organisation (branches), bank accounts, and fund raising – should not wander from Agenda.

Chris – where how branches manage their money works well, then okay.

TW – monies held centrally okay as long as written records kept by branch treasurers and LP treasurer.

RC – said that it would be unfair for poorer branches to expect LP to fund campaigns when not having made efforts to fundraise

Brian – concentrating on rebuilding Two Rivers branch, then will consider money aspect.

JG – offered to produce a paper on branch autonomy in advance of the next meeting.

TL – seconded, but with proviso of checking thoughts with LP treasurer, RS.

All accepted JG's offer.

Bob – reminded all that LP exists to return a member to Parliament.

Des – but lower orders important too.

South Norfolk Council Elections May 2019 – Results & Review

RC – Increased councillors from 7 to 10, which is a move forward but not as good as had thought might be. He circulated statistics at meeting and via email on 8 May. He gave the main drawbacks to performance as:

Changes to ward boundaries

Candidates in place too late – but did have one in every ward.

Lack of ability to campaign – short of help and time

Canvassing is about finding where our voters are – not so much about changing minds.

Jenny – it takes years to build up support – and info needs to be recorded. (She took on the challenge of learning to use Connect and Salesforce.)

Des – postal votes – where we suffered greater losses; should get letter out asap – even if non-specific re candidate.

JG – use data a lot more intelligently – and right message to target – and it takes a long, long time.

Des – too much to think of in short term. He requested that Exec consider paying an unemployed member a small fee to input data.

RC – agreed that postal votes were a key element, as evidenced by results of Ditchingham and Earsham. Need to get letter to all known supporters early (before expenses kick in).

RC also responded to Des's criticism of delay in Freepost system. He mentioned that this had been raised at NC3 on Saturday. It was proposed to move the operation from North Walsham to the Douro Place office in Norwich. 'Freepost' is too expensive for an individual Local Party.

JG – thus failed twice: failed to identify potential postal voters, and failed to contact people who had responded to surveys via Freepost system.

Des – by employing someone, we could be way better tooled up for County elections.

Chris – need to ask ourselves 'Do we upscale our operation?'

Bob – in favour of paying for committed time and expertise.

TW – next election – need will not be for admin but for people on the ground to seek the data.

Belle – re getting people involved – as a new member, she complained to Vince Cable re the difficulties in actually getting involved. She suggested a 'new members' evening.

Des – Tories struggled to find candidates too – and made them look better than they were.

Chris – suggested a separate meeting to discuss organization / campaigning etc. Mentioned that WV has active supporters.

RC – apologised to DF if info didn't get to him – but there had been a campaign plan circulated.

- also, before we can employ anyone, terms of reference need to be produced.

Jenny – she was employed by SNLP at one time but found it impossible to achieve what was required in the allotted time.

JG – proposed paying say £200 for a facilitator for a workshop meeting.

Chris – there is money available for such things from LD head office.

Shirley – reminded all that her opinion is that monthly 'club' meetings are required to get members involved. (WV meets quarterly.)

	<p><u>European election</u></p> <p>RC circulated his paper report of voting numbers per Norfolk constituencies, Norfolk totals and proportion of Eastern Region totals.</p> <p>Chris summarised – overall LDs second in region and gained 2 MEPs.</p> <p>Des noted that % change not recorded; RC a rise of 16.4% from last time.</p> <p>At Des’s request, RC to extract postal vote proportions – as he thought possible.</p> <p>Des – timing for terms of reference for an employee? Formally, too long.</p> <p>JG – as Norwich has an office, enquire if work with somehow. Minimum wage would have to be paid.</p> <p>It was agreed to hold a workshop meeting on the evening of Wednesday 17th July, with venue to be found to suit. <i>Wacton village hall</i>, (http://www.wactonvillagehall.co.uk/) booked.</p>
7	<p>Upcoming By-elections</p> <p>Peterborough parliamentary by-election on Thursday 6th June.</p>
8	<p>Membership Report</p> <p>RC circulated his paper report. Currently have 359 members, including 37 new in last 90 days.</p> <p>RC to catch up on sending Welcome emails to new members, copying in an appropriate branch officer for he/she to follow up.</p> <p>South Norfolk has 15 Young Liberals members.</p> <p>We also have 27 in the supporters scheme – RC to circulate how to find out who these are.</p> <p>HQ spent heavily for online ads during last week of European election campaign.</p> <p>HQ encouraging people to sign up for LD party membership by end of 7th June so as to have a vote in new Leader election. Target is 10,000 since European election – currently 8,300.</p> <p>To this effect they have offered a Recruitment Bulk Buy in Will Dyer’s email of 24 May:</p> <p><i>“For the amazing price of £20, we will serve online recruitment to 500 people in your area. The people we will be asking are the same ones who’ve been getting online ads from the party during the European Election – and we’ll be sending people to the local join page so you get the bonus.</i></p> <p><i>If you purchase this offer, members will be directed to the /join-local link which means that your local party will get 50% of the member’s yearly subscription and 25% for the second and third years of their membership.”</i></p> <p>Discussed and agreed that Chris would apply for £200 purchase – to reach 5000 people – on return home.</p> <p>RC emphasised importance of signing up new members via Local Party, as portions of subscriptions come to South Norfolk – refer to website.</p>
9	<p>Communications Working Party Report</p> <p>An editor is required for the website. TW to discuss with RS.</p> <p>Redirections cost £6 a year.</p>

10	<p>Diversity Compact</p> <p>Shirley – diversity not just about colour or sex but also including members’ varied life experiences. Need to encourage debate to share knowledge and viewpoints.</p> <p>HQ encouraging LPs to note the various religious and cultural calendar events and to arrange welcoming events at these times. Belle, who taught religion in schools, in favour. Des in support of trying.</p>
11	<p>Brexit: Current Situation</p> <p>Huw – we LDs need to show <u>why</u> stop Brexit.</p>
12	<p>District Council Report</p> <p>Chris has now been Group Leader for one month; TL has been enormously helpful. Group has 3 members who have each served a 4 year term and 7 new councillors. Sharon Blundell is Deputy GL.</p> <p>A question mark remains over councillor representation on Queens Hills Residents Group but otherwise committee memberships, etc, info is available online. The 1 Labour councillor seems favourable for working with.</p> <p>8 LD councillors attended training yesterday – and only 8 Conservatives. The training included info on councillor grants. Each can grant up to £1000 and the process is now a simplified online one – but all grants are checked for correct applicability.</p> <p>Grateful thanks were expressed to Trevor Lewis for his past leadership, as proposed by RC and seconded by TW.</p> <p>Des also expressed his thanks to TL for his help with the transition from the Tories to LD.</p>
13	<p>County Council Report – no report.</p> <p>County Co-ordinating Committee (NC3)</p> <p>RC is Secretary to this committee and Shirley is a second rep; a third SNLP rep was required and Des offered to attend the quarterly meetings.</p> <p>County councillor, Steffan Aquarone, was elected as Chair at Saturday’s meeting as Denys Robinson had stood down.</p> <p>A Norfolk, Liberal Democrat, Police and Crime Commissioner candidate is sought for the election in May 2020.</p>
14	<p>Branch Reports</p> <p>Held over till next/workshop meeting.</p>
15	<p>Date of Future Meetings</p> <p>Workshop – Wednesday 17th July – Wacton village hall, NR15 2UH</p> <p>Executive – Wednesday 11th September – venue to be arranged.</p> <p>Regional Conference – Cambridge – Saturday 2nd November.</p> <p>County Conference – Sprowston – evening of Friday 12th July.</p>
16	<p>AOB</p> <p>Bob spoke of the sad death of John Halliday; he asked RC to write a letter to his family on our behalf, mentioning John’s contribution and support to South Norfolk Liberal Democrats over many years.</p>

Secretary: Tom Williamson, tomwilliamson1952@gmail.com, 01379 740176
(Shirley Hagger, 07765 147 129)