

1. Apologies: Sue Davies, Tim Allan

2. Minutes & action points of the last meeting and matters arising: Minutes agreed.

3. Reports from officers and correspondence

a. Chair

- Jo welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Committee following the AGM and thanked them for volunteering to serve the Branch during what she described as a “transition year” following the UK’s decision to leave the EU. The Branch would be an important place to have discussions and provide support for BL members as the implications of the vote continue to unfold.
- Jo updated the Committee on Sadiq Khan’s visit – unfortunately due to time constraints it had been impossible to arrange a meeting, but she would continue to alert the Committee (as would other members) if similar opportunities occur in the future. .

b. Secretary

- Isobel had given a comprehensive handover. The first mailing of the new Committee was sent on 24 March. The Secretary of Labour International had been re-elected and Rosemary will write to confirm that the arrangements for communicating membership changes between the Branch and LI would remain as before.

c. Treasurer

- Accounts in credit. The necessary documents had been completed at the Bank, and Jos will follow up on some technical issues regarding internet access to the account

d. Membership secretary.

- No membership issues were reported since the last meeting

4. Committee Responsibilities

- Jo outlined the different Committee responsibilities and what the roles involved. After discussion, the following roles were assigned:

Branch meetings and the John Fitzmaurice lecture – finding and arranging speakers, logistics: Keir, Eleanor and Imogen -

Membership Secretary – Sue

National Policy Forum – Jos

Conference/Fringe – Jos

Labour International – Jo, Jos

Socials/Pub quiz – Eleanor, Tim

Communications (website, twitter and facebook) – Paul, Tom, Rosemary

Germinal – Imogen

Sister Parties – Jo, Tom and Paul

- Those involved in the different aspects of communications will form a small sub-group as the website, facebook and twitter and content produced for Germinal are inter-linked.

5. Branch meetings and other events in 2017

- **Wednesday 26 April** – Alain Hutchinson had agreed to talk to the Branch about the situation for UK citizens since the EU referendum. The meeting room still had to be confirmed with FEPS; Eleanor agreed to arrange the refreshments. It was also suggested to follow the meeting with a discussion on a possible Brussels Labour submission to the NPF on International issues (particularly Brexit) –depending on Keir’s availability (see below)
- **Wednesday 31st May** – It was proposed to arrange a meeting to discuss the outcomes of the French presidential elections with a French PS MEP – Jo to liaise with the delegation
- **Wednesday 28th June** – It was proposed to invite David Martin MEP to discuss the latest situation regarding Brexit and the possible Scottish referendum
- **Wednesday 19th July** – Summer Social
- **John Fitzmaurice Lecture** – It was proposed to invite Hilary Benn MP to give the lecture, given his role as Brexit Select Committee Chair, but if he was unavailable, other possibilities could be Helena Kennedy or Sadiq Khan, but Mr Benn would be approached first. Dates would confirmed depending on their availability

6. LI

- Jos updated the Committee on the results of the election of the LI Coordinating Committee. BL member Colin O’Driscoll is one of the Co-Chairs and had requested to attend the next BL Exec Committee meeting to discuss ways in which LI and BL could continue their cooperation.
- Jos also updated the Committee with the process for making submissions to the NPF for the annual policy consultation. There are 8 policy areas, but the most important for the branch is the one dealing with international issues, as this would also cover Brexit. Keir undertook to put himself forward as rapporteur for this policy area and coordinate a submission for Brussels Labour and LI, with Jos’ support. It was also suggested to organise a Branch discussion on the submission at the next Branch Meeting following intervention by Alain Hutchinson. The key dates are as follows:

Mid-end first week of April	– deadline for appointing rapporteurs
16 th April	- draft outline of LI position
31 st May	- deadline for submissions

- Jos would also make a submission separately on the policy area dealing with the economy
- Jos also reminded the Committee of the possibility of applying to attend Conference as part of the LI delegation

7. Sister parties

- Jo raised the possibility of arranging a social event, as a sort of welcome for BL members who had become Belgian citizens

8. Communications, website, mailings, Germinal

- Germinal: The latest edition of Germinal had been uploaded to the website and circulated in the last Branch mailing
- Website and Facebook are up-to-date and Paul, Tom, Imogen and Rosemary will meet to discuss the interaction between Germinal, mailings, Facebook, Twitter and the website (see above)
- Next mailing to include reminder about next Branch meeting (when venue confirmed) and NPF submission process

9. AOB: None.

10. Next meeting: Wednesday 10 May