



CAMBRIDGESHIRE ASSOCIATION

Minutes of General meeting held on Wednesday 12th March 2014 at Long Road SFC, Cambridge

Present: Philippe Harari (Chair) and 9 members

Apologies: Jackie Francis, Louise Crook, Daphne Babouris

1. **Minutes of last meeting:** the minutes of the General Meeting held on 25th September 2013 were read and signed by the Chair as a true record.

2. **Pay, pensions and workload campaign:** the meeting agreed the following.

- Inform our members that their non-NUT colleagues do not have to cross picket lines – Philippe
- Continue to run the highly successful stalls (Cambridge 15th – Paula, Cambridge 22nd – Philippe, Huntingdon 22nd – Lesley)
- To arrange to rally outside the Guildhall on the 26th March (or on Christ's Pieces if that is not possible) – Jon to talk to police and draw up a preliminary list of speakers, Philippe to arrange for a PA system
- To send out appropriate press releases - Jon to draft, Philippe to check, Tom to send out
- To continue informing members about the dispute through our e-newsletter – Philippe
- Ask members in schools what they need in terms of materials for the strike day - Tom

3. **Nominations for GS and DGS of the NUT:** The meeting agreed that Cambridgeshire Association should nominate Christine Blower for General Secretary and Kevin Courtney for Deputy General Secretary.

4. **Amendments to Conference Motions:** The meeting agreed to submit the following amendments

1. Motion 12 - CHILD POVERTY

Add new points 12 and 13 after "Conference notes that:"

12. whilst the Tory and Lib Dem coalition government asserts that the economy is improving and living standards are rising, schools see that families increasingly have to use food banks to survive and opportunities for young people continue to be restricted. Tuition fees and cuts to EMA have reduced access to higher and further education and any increase in employment is often in private sector jobs with poor job security, zero-hours contracts, no access to pensions and on low pay.

13. this government has failed to set a target for reducing child poverty.

Add new third and fourth paragraphs:

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Conference condemns any attempts by the media and politicians to scapegoat those on benefits. Conference notes that bankers and executives and particularly those in high level positions in academy chains and trusts, are continuing to draw excessive salaries, while those on benefits see a drop in income.

Conference notes that families hit by the bedroom tax are seeing a cut in income. These cuts disproportionately impact on families with members who have disabilities. This also affects the many children living in families where parents are separated and hampers their ability to visit families where 'spare' rooms are being targeted.

Add new points after Conference instructs the Executive to:

xv. support organisations working with families facing benefit cuts, severe housing need and debts due to benefit cuts

xvi. oppose the bedroom tax and work with organisations campaigning against the bedroom tax

xvii. support campaigns against benefit cuts and highlight the impact of the bedroom tax and cuts to benefits on children;

xix. raise the issue of child poverty with government and with politicians in the run-up to a general election.

2. Motion 16 - GENERAL ELECTION 2015

Add a new third paragraph:

Conference also notes, and condemns, Labour's education spokesperson Tristram Hunt's comments that he would not, if in office after the election, reverse most of the Coalition's education policies. Conference also notes that the bitter experience of governments in France and Denmark over recent years shows that, whoever is in office after the next election, we will have to organise and fight to defend teachers and education. Conference believes that intervening in the general election 2015 can be a vital part of this process.

In fifth paragraph:

In point 6, both revenue and capital' after "Funding":

Add new points 7 and 8 and re-number

7. 'Early years provision and education'

8. 'Young people, education and employment'

Amend new point 9, to read:

'Further and Higher education as well as Lifelong learning.'

After Conference instructs the Executive....

Insert a new point ii and re-number:

ii. Produce materials for members making a critical assessment of the education policies of the political parties

Add new points:

iv. Seek support from other trade unions, the National Union of Students, other educational campaigns and academics;

v. Raise the necessity of a National Campaign for Education.

After "This campaign could include:" in point c replace 'main' with 'political'.

3. Motion 21 - TOO MUCH TOO SOON.

Delete all reference to “The Primary Charter” and replace with “The Charter for Primary Education”

In first paragraph, delete all after first sentence and replace with:

“This campaign has been organised by the Save Childhood movement and has made good links with the Charter for Primary Education”. It aims to promote age-appropriate practice in primary education with a particular focus on the early years”

Add new paragraph 6

“Conference notes with concern, the governments plans to introduce new “baseline” testing for four year olds within the first two weeks of their reception year. Such testing can only cause stress and anxiety to children at the most formative stage of their school life. We believe that formal tests have no place in the early years and that the introduction of baseline testing would have a negative impact upon the education of young children”

After Conference instructs the Executive to”:

In point iii.

delete *“and the Primary charter”*

Add new point:

vii) publicise the dangers of testing at four.

4. Motion 24 - OFSTED

Add new paragraph after “Many Ofsted inspectors have not taught for a sustained period in a classroom for decades.”

“Conference also expresses its serious concern that the outsourcing of Ofsted inspections to private organisations has the potential to create a fundamental clash of interests, with, for example, inspectors with relationships with an academy chain inspecting schools that could subsequently be taken over by that chain.”

In the section “Conference believes that”

Delete points iii. and iv. and add new point:

iii. *“Ofsted delivers no benefits to teaching and learning and is primarily a political tool aimed at bullying teachers and extending forced academisation.”*

Delete the section beginning “Conference instructs the Executive to:” and replace with:

“Conference therefore has no confidence in Ofsted and instructs the Executive to work with other teaching unions and academics to:

- (a) Commission research into the impact of Ofsted on the educational experience of children, and into the impact of alternative monitoring and evaluation systems, such as those operating in Finland.
- (b) Recommend, publicise and build support for a credible evidence based alternative to Ofsted, run by and for practicing teachers, which is respected as fair, professional, developmental and supportive.
- (c) Establish a broad based campaign, alongside other unions, academics, parents, students, and political and community organisations, to abolish Ofsted.”

Add final paragraph:

“Conference further calls on the Executive to investigate procedures for declaring and acting on a trade dispute over the workload and stress implications of Ofsted.”

5. Motion 30 - BRINGING DOWN THE BARRIERS – TEN YEARS ON

Delete paragraph 3 and replace with:

However, Conference notes that the Union has produced a new vision for education, as it was asked to do by a previous Conference as well as the ‘Valuing Teachers, Valuing Education’ document and that these documents can form the basis of a more aggressive campaign by the Union. In particular these documents can be used to drive forward the National Campaign for Education as supported by NUT Conference 2012 and 2013 and the UNISON conference in 2013.

After Conference instructs the Executive to:”

Delete point 1 and replace with:

‘Support with financial grants and organisational capacity work at a local level that seeks to create National Campaign for Education networks’;

In point 2:

insert after ‘the TUC’, ‘supportive academics and others’

Delete point 3 and replace with:

‘Organise in partnership with local networks and other organisations a ‘National Campaign for Education’ Conference before the end of 2015’.

6. Motion 53 - MAINTAINING A LAY LED UNION

In paragraph 2, delete sentence beginning, “It notes that the...”, and replace with:

“The Government recently completed a consultation into Facilities time the outcome of which was recommendations that would – if followed – reduce facilities time in many areas.”

In paragraph 3, delete all from, “But it reminds the Executive”, and replace with:

“Conference reminds the Executive that the bedrock of an organising union is an effective lay structure with Division and Association Officers representing members at a local level and Executive Members representing their Districts at a national level”.

Delete “Conference reiterates its instruction to the Executive” and replace with, “Conference instructs the Executive to”.

Delete existing action point 1. and replace with, “Monitor closely the changes in facilities time over the next year.”

Delete existing action point 2. and replace with, “Continue the work of the Regional Organisers and look into how that can be extended.”

Delete existing action point 3.

5. Resolutions: The following resolutions were all carried by the meeting.

Pay, pensions and workload campaign

1. We fully support the planned national one day strike called by the NUT for Wednesday 26th March.
2. We urge the NASUWT leadership to back the strike too, as it will be all the more powerful if the two main teaching unions are out together"

3. We pledge to join protests on the day, and also to support campaigning activities in the build-up to the strike in order to get the message that we are fighting to defend education from Michael Gove's assaults across to parents and the wider public.
4. We support NUT policy which recognises that to beat Gove will require an "escalating campaign" of strikes.
5. We believe the most effective way to beat back Gove would be to build towards a ballot for an indefinite national strike in the autumn, linked to a massive public campaign to mobilise behind our campaign to defend education - in the way that Chicago teachers in the US showed could win quickly.
6. In order to ramp up the pressure on Gove and win teachers to support that kind of fight we believe that NUT conference at Easter should endorse a calendar of escalating national strike action - including as a minimum a national two day strike in the summer term, followed by further national action in the autumn.

Support CCS

This branch notes that last week the Lifeworks Centre in Tension Road was occupied by a number of women who use the Complex Cases Service. This is a mental health facility that has been available for people with personality disorders. This service has been available to offer 1-1 therapy, a place to meet and support for mainly women who would otherwise be socially isolated. It has been open for 12 years and was originally open 5 days a week. The service has been paired down to two days opening and was announced for closure by the Cambridge and Peterborough Foundation Trust recently.

This branch notes how incredibly difficult and brave it is for women with such mental health disorders to decide to stand up for their service and fight its closure.

This branch proposes to support the campaign to save this service and resolves to;

1. publicise the occupation to our members and encourage people to visit it.
2. publicise and encourage our members to sign the e-petition-tinyurl.com/SaveCCS
4. write to the bodies responsible for making the cuts to the service and to Julian Huppert MP
5. publicise and attend the rally on Sat. 15th March outside the Cambridge Guildhall at 2pm

Cambridgeshire Association of the NUT agrees to submit the following motion to the Cambridge and District Trades Union Council

The Cambridge and District Trades Council recognises:

1. The ongoing work of the People's Assembly, both nationally and locally, in raising the issues around austerity.
2. The support and development the networks and activist fighting against cuts and privatisation of our service.
3. The particularly successful meeting a discussion forums that the Cambridge People's assembly has hosted, including recent events with Ha-Joon Chang and on 'A Women's Place ins in Her Union' both of which have laid the basis for rebuilding the anti cuts work in the area'
4. That there is a need for strengthening the People's assembly locally to ensure that it encompasses all of the those wanting to resist the Con-Dem austerity drive and the austerity measures of any future government

The Cambridge and District Trades Council resolves to:

1. Continue to play an active and supportive role in the work being carried out by the Cambridge People's Assembly.
2. Donate £250 towards the ongoing costs of running the Cambridge People's Assembly.