

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY LIBERAL DEMOCRATS CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 25 NOVEMBER 2017

Present: Thomas Bull, Paul Holmes, Cllr Barry Bingham, Colin Thompson, Jonathan Sneade, Tony Rogers (in the chair), Cllr Ruth Skelton, Ian Care, Cllr Lucy Care, Alex Davenport, Cllr Mike Carr, Midge Dobbs, Peter Dobbs, Robert Mee, Kate Smith (notes)

Local Parties not represented: High Peak, North East Derbyshire & Bolsover

Apologies: Anne and John Morgan, Cllr Les Allen, Regina Kay, Roger Shelley, Linda Walker, Adam and Becky Wain, Angela Togni, Jane and Keith Oseman, Martin Garnett, Sue Allen, Steven Raison, Ross Shipman, Cllr David Hancock, Stephen Connolly, Ed Fordham.

1 The chair opened the meeting with mention of the bereavement which had recently befallen the Wildgoose family and other Derbyshire Dales volunteers, which explained in part the shortage of publicity for it. He said this would be his last meeting as chair, thanked all present for their support and emphasised the need to get candidates into place early in 2018.

2 The minutes of the 2016 AGM were approved, subject to the following amendments: (a) list of attendees to be added; (b) on page 2 under Report from Derby City, second sentence to read "talk of changing to all-out elections" and fourth sentence to read "Lucy summarised the by-election in Allestree". The list of attendees noted by KS in 2016 had been as follows: Cllr Joe Naitta, ?, Colin Thompson, Richard Salmon, Thomas Bull, Jonathan Sneade, Lucy Care, Ian Care, David Hancock, Ross Shipman, Robert Mee, PW, Cllr Sue Burfoot, Martin Burfoot, Tom Snowdon, Paul Holmes, Cllr Barry Bingham, Stephen Connolly, Cllr Les Allen, Adam Wain, Becky Thomas, Kate Smith, DS, Cllr Mike Carr, Angela Togni, Pat Wildgoose, Jane Oseman and John Shoosmith. (Apologies for incompleteness, can anyone fill the gaps ?)

3 Reports from Officers and Cllrs: (a) Chair: nothing to add

(b) Treasurer: KS produced a sheet covering 2017 and pointed out the scant expenditure. PH wished to adjust no (4) on the Notes to the Accounts, to read "Chesterfield needed help to run a full campaign". This item, a proposal that the Derbyshire Group subsidises Local Parties which are in serious and demonstrable financial difficulty, was discussed at some length, with several present pointing out that there is already some financial help available from Region. Examples of need included a final leaflet to make a difference in a target Ward, unaffordable Kickstart attendance and Ed Fordham's suggestion about portable phone bank equipment which could be lent around the county. It was **Proposed** by JS and seconded by BB that a small group be set up to examine criteria and parameters for a limited subsidies scheme. This was unanimously **carried**; the group to comprise PH, KS, JS and RM, to meet in January 2018 and to report to the next meeting.

(c) BB reported on his work during the year on the County Council. He thanked colleagues for their support and described several meetings. One of these was a special one to remove the Chief Executive and two Strategic Directors. He also said that sitting on the Resources Committee was useful in giving him insights into the inside workings of DCC. Other current issues include D2N2 and a Government initiative to improve transparency. BB promised to send a copy of his Chesterfield AGM Report to accompany these minutes and this was welcomed.

RS updated the group on Derby City Council, where Labour is currently in control with a majority of 1. Current issues included unhappiness with external auditors (in process of being resolved), lack of consultation with neighbouring Councils over the Metro Strategy, serious difficulties with Special Educational Needs and removal of Libraries from the "statutory offer". There were hopes that a group called Direct Help and Advice would take all 10 of these over. She undertook to liaise with Cllr Sue Burfoot over Fire Authority matters, since SB is joining the Fire Authority.

LC added, on Derby City Council, consultation over a new performance venue (financing this looks difficult), Queen's and Moorways swimming pools, walkouts by Tory members over taxi licensing, and a Motion of No Confidence in Cllr Gulfranz Nawaz.

(d) President: LC felt she had nothing to add.

4 By-election Reports: PH was pleased to say that the Holmewood one had been a win, particularly since Labour had been overly complacent; PD described the 26 October Ashbourne South one as a "good second place" and said the help from outside the LP had been gratifying. LC pointed out that the Derwent Ward by-election was a more complex case and had gone Tory for the first time, but was an increase on 2016.

5 Local Party Reports: JS took the opportunity of this item to update the group on the Derbyshire-wide Reorganisation, which in the main has been progressing smoothly. He thanked all who have helped the process, particularly RM, who was generally praised. However, in the course of discussion it became clear that Derbyshire Dales has so far failed to hold a Dissolving/Reconvening Special General Meeting, and that the time remaining in which to do this (by 31 December 2017) is now tight. One possible solution might be for the LP to write formally to Region and ask them to impose the reorganisation on the LP, but this was thought an undesirable last resort. At this point Phil Smith, Regional Infrastructure Building Officer, briefly entered the discussion and offered to explore ways of achieving the SGM including via the LP chair.

TR then invited reports from LPs not already covered in discussion. KS briefed the group on the newly-expanding Amber Valley, which is gaining 5 Wards from the dissolving Mid Derbyshire and 3

from Derbyshire Dales, and thanked Mid Derbyshire colleagues who have contributed excellent help and hard work under extremely frustrating circumstances (HQ's failure to provide membership data and HQ's failure to send the LP a large and increasing backlog of membership service fees were two main instances).

6 DCC election results: these had been largely covered, but TR stated that overall staying at 3 Councillors had been "a bit of a setback". BB added that, on the County Council, the Conservatives tended to look down on Liberal Democrat colleagues but Labour did not.

7 Election of Officers for 2017: this took place by show of hands.

Chair: Jonathan Sneade was nominated by MC and seconded by RM; passed unanimously.

Treasurer: Kate Smith was put forward by CT and seconded by MC; passed by a large majority.

Vice Chair: Mike Carr was suggested by KS and seconded by RS; unanimously carried.

President: Tony Rogers was nominated by JS and seconded by TB; passed unanimously.

Secretary: It was agreed that Pat Wildgoose will be contacted for "first refusal" to explore continuing in role, but that LC would be willing to take it on if she was not; LC was thanked for this kind offer.

8 Any other business: PH pointed out that the County Group Constitution was contradictory especially on Policy, and needed improvement (this had been agreed on at the last AGM, but not taken forward since the snap general election had got in the way). **Resolved** to set up a small working group on this matter, consisting of RM, PH and JS, the group to report at the next meeting.

9 Date of next AGM: KS suggested setting one immediately, but was overruled since JS wished to find out if resources and time could be saved by holding it at the next Autumn Regional Conference, and the date of this had not yet been set. **Agreed** that JS will take this forward and communicate to the group.