



PCS PROUD Annual General Meeting
Saturday 10th November 2018
PCS Leeds Regional Office

Minutes

Chair - Richard Jones

1. Announcements and apologies

Richard welcomed attendees and thanked everyone for attending. Richard introduced himself and Kris Hendry as minute taker in the absence of the Secretary, Eddy Nixon, who had submitted his apologies prior to the meeting.

Richard noted thanks to Phyll Opoku-Gyimah and Laure Djida from PCS Equality Dept for their attendance and assistance and extended a welcome to Jackie Green as NECLO to Proud and guest speaker.

Richard provided confirmation of numbers required for voting purposes with introductions given. Chair confirmed for motions that 2/3 majority required for rules and simple majority for any other motions.

Attendance confirmed as 17 so 2/3 majority of 12 required for rule changes and 9 for simple majority

Kris noted he had received apologies prior to the meeting from Tom Wright, Sam Larkin-Buckland, David Breton, Samantha Cooper, Julie Young. Further apologies noted from the floor were Henrietta Daniell, Jay Bedford and Angela Grant

2. Election of tellers/scrutineers

Meeting agreed Phyll Opoku-Gyimah and Laure Djida as tellers for the meeting.

3. Adoption of standing orders and order of business

Richard advised two EM's have been received. One was rejected by Standing Orders on grounds issue could have been submitted prior to motion deadline and second accepted and would be heard during section 13.

Question raised by Kris Hendry, asked for confirmation that rule change motions would be heard as general debate, Chair advised SOC confirmed this was accepted.

Meeting accepted SOC1

4. Chair's address

Richard thanked everyone for attending, appreciates it has been difficult for members to give time to Proud and appreciated effort and sacrifice by members to attend.

Difficult time for our community, despite progress over the past 50 years such as Stonewall and decriminalisation to equal marriage in most of the country as well as international progress, there is still work to do.

These attacks will continue unless we stand up.

Brexit is often used as a weapon to alienate others but so much remains unknown and we need to keep a watch on to tackle those who want to roll back our hard won rights.

Attacks will continue even if Brexit goes way we want or even if it is not achieved and our movement needs to remember there is more that unites than divides us, as LGBT+ people we have a lot more in common than we don't and we should all keep that in mind following this meeting.

Thanks in particular noted to members who took part in our GRA consultation and apologies to those who may have missed the opportunity to take part and incoming Committee will learn lessons from experience. Jackie will update on NEC progress on the GRA but issue has been discussed within ECC and NEC with submission made on 18th October.

Pay, again Jackie will discuss in more depth but issue will remain a campaign focus for Proud.

Invite given to David Cunningham to address AGM. David promoted wristbands from Northern LGBT committee and encouraged attendees to donate as funds support work in region to fund events such as Pride.

5. Adoption of minutes of the 2017 annual general meeting

Meeting agreed minutes of the 2017 AGM.

6. Matters arising

No matters arising raised

7. Guest Speaker, Jackie Green, PCS National Vice-President

Jackie provided update from NEC.

Recognised Proud were badly hurt by events over the summer, however Richard correct GRA submission was submitted after debate within ECC, PRC and NDC and want to reassure that NEC is committed to all strands of equality and has interest from Proud perspective as LGBT+ person. Submission was at 11th hour but this was to ensure full discussion.

Jackie discussed what the GRA means for trans people, recognising trans people are maligned in society and as a community which also suffers we need to stand in solidarity to achieve simplified gender recognition process as current process is overly complicated.

Jackie reflected on experience in Home Office and experience of trans women she had experience with in the Court System which resulted in the individual being sent to prison and housed in a male prison despite protestation of her legal support and ultimately resulted in that individual taking her own life despite concerns being raised by her partner which is unacceptable.

Important that GRA is updated to avoid such scenarios being repeated. Aware of concerns and hyperbole of media in stirring up reaction to isolated incident and is very much in support of reforming the GRA and need to ensure space for concerns to be addressed for those who aren't as aware of trans issues and need to be allowed to ask questions.

Update given on pay. Fantastic campaign during summer despite members view of failure, incorrect view as result better than any in union's history. Jackie discussed MEP in MoJ and potential for similar situation in HMRC shortly where staff will be asked to trade T&C's for additional pay.

MoJ pay offer involved increase in hours for 3%, 3%, 3%, 1%, 1% as well as changes to overtime and bank holiday provisions. Members were balloted in MoJ, including electronic and postal ballots. NEC believe this should be the case for ALL ballot's instead of use of post only and will be pushing for this change to be made in law.

Ballot in MoJ achieved an almost 75% turnout (96% voted against MEP) despite ballot taking place during school holidays.

Important we now begin to plan for ballot in 2019 and ensuring we are ready to fight to achieve required turnout.

Member of team in MoJ calculated that 3% rise equated to 28p a month which resulted in suggestion to reject, catching employer by surprise. Issue has

impacted relations with MoJ management but expect this will impact on offers being made in HMRC and elsewhere.

Union wants to build to breach the 50% cap and believe it can be done. Initial result was disappointing but NEC and PCS have had some successes. Two court wins in regards to check off (£3mil in DWP), with further cases pending, and CSCS scheme victory with previous rates still in place today despite time lapsed since original victory.

Proud to be a member of PCS as a fighting union which campaigns on behalf of all of our members. Encourage members to promote the ballot and that we are an organising, not servicing union.

Questions

Q. 28p is below what other Dept's get which means we will have different fights in other areas.

A. When dealing with MEP at bargaining meetings, DfT experience highlighted need to check finer details as problems arose following agreement in DfT. PCS very clear that adding an hour to working week is not "modernising"

Clear that we would remain at the table despite rejection to continue dialogue to avoid yearly negotiations which majority of employer side agreed barring one individual which helped result in rejection.

Q. Issue from area where I work on trans issues. Now we've won £3m what is the union going to do with it?

A. Full NEC hasn't taken place as yet, ideas have been floated including donation to fighting fund but no firm decisions have been made with next NEC meeting on 4/5th December

Q. Can some funds be put towards equality areas to encourage members to come onboard? On trans, call came into office from an individual wishing to change their name which resulted in debate in the workplace which allowed for education on the issue and positive outcome, where is equality training in workplaces?

A. Saorsa does provide training on trans equality. Suggestion to approach employer to request training be delivered although some employers advising they have their own which we should be prepared to push back on if unsatisfactory.

Q. People don't live and breathe equality with experiences of racism in workplace and no management action taken. Action taken by Branch, management agreed but BEC (largely white men) took position that racism not an issue within the branch. This resulted in stepping down from BEC and training being delivered by employer. Need for us to challenge such attitudes

to ensure equality is part of our agenda and management should not be performing better than PCS on issue.

A. Part of problem is people don't recognise their own part in the problem. In MoJ there are bullying champions where many of the champions are those identified as bullies.

Q. Suggest some funds put into delivering equalities training of branch reps

A. Need to remember £3m is large amount of money but union was in precarious position not long ago. £3m does not cover losses, will make point but cannot guarantee that suggestion will be accepted.

Q. Mentioned GRA, how many trans people were included in the debate?

A. There are no trans people on the NEC. Accept I do not understand experience of those out with own experience as out L woman. Union does try to consider experiences of those in under represented communities.

NEC got feeling for level of feeling following experience at TUC LGBT+ Conference. If we want to ensure more voices are heard then we need individuals to stand for Committee's and ensure, in meantime, that reports are fed into NEC which hasn't been happening in recent times.

Q. Made point there was a lively debate, but point is Committee's which have opposed GRA have representation on NEC which skewed nature of any debate when no trans voices involved. Survey was undertaken but no voice during debate.

A. Aware an invite was made to Proud by NEC with majority of NEC wanting to attend. Point was made that Proud should decide who they want to meet and understand this meeting took place after issues during TUC LGBT+ Conference.

Moving forward encourage you to stand for Executive Committee positions and encourage anyone who wishes to discuss further to contact Jackie privately.

8. Presentation of the annual report (Q&A)

Report was circulated prior to meeting. No questions raised.

9. Presentation of the financial statements (Q&A)

No report. Apologies offered by Richard, would like to extend thanks to Equality Dept for their support in allowing AGM to take place in lieu of audited accounts. Once issues are resolved then report will be published for members reference with process to be determined by incoming Chair.

10. Motions 1-8 (General Debate)

(Copies of motions 1 - 18 can be found in SOC1 - Agenda)

Motion 1 - Carried

Motion 2 - Carried

Motion 3 - Carried

Motion 4 - Carried

Motion 5 - Carried

Motion 6 - Carried

Motion 7 - Carried

Motion 8 - Carried

11. Break

12. Motions 9-14 (rule changes)

Motion 9

Ste Griffiths - Oppose. Thanks to NC for considering how we can improve relationship with Equality Dept. As previous Secretary aware of how important it is that all positions are elected and appreciate work of Full Time Officers

Nothing that stops good link with Equality Dept when National Committee is properly organised and proposal removes democracy and allows FTO's to influence decisions within the National Committee.

Stephen Finch - Oppose. Kris made point that motion brings into line with rest of equality committees but Proud is different to other committees in that we are self organised.

Jackie Green - Support. Ste made point that individuals on NC should support members and FTO is paid by members and up to individuals whether to follow any advice from an FTO. More sensible to have a FTO to take pressure off of members on the Committee as job of secretary can be a pressurised position.

Point of order raised. Numerous counts of FTO's approaching GS' office and GS has overruled decisions of Committee's. Jackie advised if a decision was made that required escalation it would go to General Secretary. Can also propose a further rule change if found situation is not working.

David Cunningham - Oppose. We need to keep roles within the confines of our group. Experience of own region is to try and keep things self controlled wherever possible.

Gordon McDonald - Oppose. We do have FTO's but every member of the NC should be self identified as LGBT+ and elected. FTO's should be able to feed in advice and this would not be prevented.

Motion 9 - Defeated

****Motion 10 felled***

Motion 11

Ste Griffiths - Support. We push for employer to do this so we should as well. However aware of member who has not been receiving papers due to not providing personal email and can this be looked into.

Kris Hendry - Aware of circumstances at same time as member notified, will need to discuss between incoming National Committee and Equality Dept.

Motion 11 - Carried

Motion 12

Ste Griffiths - Remit. Should be put to NC to consider for follow up motion next year in order to consider inclusion of non-binary members to help make delegations more representative as current wording enforces gender binary requirement.

Richard Jones - Not sure remission valid as motion is to cover change of election process rather than amending wording on gender split.

Saorsa Tweedale - Remit. Disagree with Chair's position. Motion reinforces gender binary and would request remission on that basis.

Kris Hendry - Accept suggestion to address gender binary but encourage support as motion not to address this point and failure to support will mean in event of ballot for TUC LGBT+ Conference 2020 we will be unable to utilise electronic balloting and have to wait another year.

Motion 12 - Remitted

Motion 13

Tony Moore - Support, ensuring need to avoid restrictions on who attend seminar or AGM.

Phyll Opoku Gyimah - Decision of number for seminar are a decision of PCS Finance Dept and not Proud

Richard Jones - Allowed intervention from Phyll to offer background.

Motion 13 - Carried

Motion 14 - Withdrawn

Motion 15 - Carried

Motion 16 - Carried

Motion 17 - Carried

Motion 18

Bridget Corcoran - Remit. A45 has already been passed by ADC to review harassment protocol, also doesn't refer to Rule 10 specifically. If comment made by an FTO, they must follow appropriate disciplinary process and motion doesn't clarify enough and could be tidied.

David Cunningham - Remit. Wording of motion, use of we demand inappropriate. Can ask but cannot demand.

Motion 18 - Remitted

Emergency Motion 1

(Text of motion attached at Annex 1)

Ste Griffiths - Support. Outraged over issue. Union leadership has to rebuild trust with our members after what has gone on throughout consultation and been submitted in our name. Training issue should have happened long time ago and public forum is important and outcome has to be published for members to review.

Kris Hendry - Remit. Personal view on trans equality well known so remit not suggested lightly. On GRA statement, this is in process but has taken time as Proud Committee felt it important words came from us in first instance but we have other commitments at same time.

Concerns also over suggestion of public forum. In discussions with Mark he has indicated willingness to dialogue with members however we need to consider most suitable, and safest, option to facilitate this discussion.

No issue on suggestion of trans awareness training, well aware of issues with portions of membership who may not be aware of much in terms of trans equality and training good way to address.

Sarah Valentine - On GRA response, important that this is shared as soon as possible in interests of transparency. Will put remission to floor

Ste Griffiths - Oppose remit. Important for transparency. Not in doubt that Kris will take forward what he says. Has seen claims online that submission was last minute due to opposition from GS but not necessarily the case and need response issued as soon as possible for members attention.

Stephen Finch - Oppose remit. Why was response not issued on day as information available?

Saorsa Tweedale - Favour of remit. Need to take people to task on failings but agree with Kris on point 2 and nature of forum needs to be considered to ensure it is held. Issue with having to run through NWF when issue only affects trans people has delayed process.

Emergency Motion 1 - Remitted

14. Election update and call from the floor to fill vacancies
(Elections confirmed prior to AGM available via SOC1)

The following nominations were received and accepted from the floor:

- Organiser (Learning/Regional & Devolved Nations) - Stephen Finch
- Treasurer - Tom Wright

- Bisexual Members Rep - David Cunningham/Sam Cooper (Job share)
- Black Members Rep - Yemisi Ilesanmi
- Trans Members Rep - Saorsa Tweedale
- Woman Members Rep - Bridget Corcoran
- Young Members Rep - Sam Larkin-Buckland

- North West - Matt Exley/Lindsay Melia (Job share)
- Yorks & Humber - Maryam Watson
- Eastern - Yemisi Ilesanmi
- London & South East - Gordon McDonald
- South West - Dorion Griffiths
- Wales - Ste Griffiths

- Standing Orders - Matt Taylor

Chair advised the remaining vacancies would be considered by the incoming National Committee on how to address these positions.

15. Any other business

TUC LGBT+ Conference - Delegation agreed. Phyll suggested NC consideration be given to applying for space for observer to allow new delegate an opportunity to attend.

TUC LGBT+ Committee - Saorsa has been confirmed as cooption to this years TUC LGBT+ Committee.

AGM agreed Saorsa for renomination at 2019 TUC LGBT+ Committee.

16. Vote of thanks

Richard thanked Proud NC over course of election cycle, work has achieved a lot for members and thank you. Thank TUC and STUC LGBT+ delegates and members on other TUC regional committee delegation.

Personal note of thanks following difficult summer to Kris and Saorsa and thanks to Jackie as NECLO and thank you to PCS full time officers for their support in Equality and Regional Offices, in particular Phyll and Laure for their support today. And lastly main thank you noted to members for their support.

Meeting closed

Annex 1

Emergency Motion

The work PROUD has done to further trans rights has been nothing short of extraordinary, given recent events and the constant of smearing against our trans and non-binary family in the media. However, while this work is to be applauded, during our LGBT+ Members Seminar it was stated that the PCS GRA consultation produced in collaboration with PROUD members would be published shortly with a statement from our General Secretary, Mark Serwotka.

As of 06 November, this has not yet been done, and responses to questions asked at our LGBT+ members seminar indicated this is still in progress. Evidence also indicates that our unions submission on the GRA was completed at the very last minute, which does not echo the sentiments of motion A18. PCS did not publish any supporting materials to help our members consider their own responses, and PCS did not actively at any time show any significant support for the consultation. However, it has to be noted that PCS did publish a statement from the NEC in support of trans rights, and Equalities have recently produced literature for the Trans Day of Remembrance.

While there has been some work done, this is not enough, and is not in the full spirit of motion A18 which was passed at conference and which instructed the NEC to work with Proud, trans groups and other allies to ensure that review and reforms to the GRA were adopted without delay, to lobby parliament, and to use our union's voice in support of our trans and non-binary comrades in the press and media. This has not entirely happened. As this motion was carried at ADC, it is the will of our union to ensure that the motion is integrated into the work of our union. As such, this motion calls for:

- PNC to urgently and with the highest priority ensure that our unions GRA response is published in order to reassure our trans and non-binary members are fully aware and reassured by our response,
- A public forum is held between our union's senior lay officials and all trans and non-binary members who wish to attend in order to rebuild trust and provide assurances,
- A recommendation is put forward to the NEC that Mandatory Trans awareness training is provided to senior lay reps and officials, including the NEC and GEC's of our union to ensure that they are fully informed on trans and non-binary issues and their actions in the future are in line with the best interests of trans and non-binary people, and that all people are given a safe space and a resource to ask questions and debate issues in a fraternal and positive manner.