

## Fabian Society AGM 2019

### Minutes

Saturday, 16th November 2019, 2.30 pm to 4pm  
Mary Sumner House, 24 Tufton St, Westminster, London SW1P 3RB

Attendance: around 50 members of the Fabian Society. The meeting was chaired by Catriona Munro (vice chair).

#### 1. Apologies

Ivana Bartoletti (chair), David Chaplin (treasurer) and a number of executive committee members and members presented their apologies, including a number of politicians who are running campaigns

#### 2. Minutes of the 2018 AGM

The 2018 minutes were agreed.

#### 3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising

#### 4. In memoriam

A moment of silence was observed for Fabian members who had passed away in the last year.

#### 5. Chair's report

Lord Kennedy (vice chair) presented the chair's report in her absence. He said the Fabian Society had worked to find solutions and bring politicians, policy makers and activists together. He highlighted the work of the Commission on Workers and Technology chaired by Yvette Cooper MP, and projects on controversial areas such as immigration and tax reform. He was particularly proud of projects conducted in partnership with Labour frontbenchers Jonathan Ashworth and Keir Starmer, and the pamphlet presenting proposals for parliamentary reform from 11 newly elected MPs. He thanked the volunteer-led sections, local Fabian Societies and the staff team.

#### 6. Treasurer's report

Lord Kennedy (vice chair, incoming treasurer) delivered the treasurer's report in the absence of David Chaplin, thanking him for his service on the day he stood down. He explained that in the year ending 30 June 2018 the society had effectively broken even (a loss of £650), with a considerable increase in turnover on the year, partly due to one-off projects. He said that the society continued to face fundraising challenges in the current financial and political environment. There was a modest increase in member income and he thanked the members listed in the annual report (and others who remain anonymous) for their additional voluntary donations.

## **7. General secretary's report**

Andrew Harrop reported on the society's extensive programme for the year 2018/19.

Fabian Society events had included flagship conferences with Tom Watson, Keir Starmer, Emily Thorberry, Alison Rayner, Jonathan Ashworth and Yvette Cooper. The society had held a northern conference with Andy Burnham in November. It convened a special summit on social security reform and hosted lectures by Gordon Brown, Tom Watson and Andy Burnham.

The editorial team continued to produce the Fabian Review, which had profiled writers and ideas from across the left. Commissioned publications included reports on the NHS at fifty, the UK after Brexit, parliamentary reform, the future of childhood and immigration policy.

The society's principal research project was the Commission on Workers and Technology which would report in 2020. Other research conducted during the year included work on re-establishing consensus on pensions policy, a study of Labour's electoral support, a paper on fiscal policy, an influential project on the decline of arts education in primary schools, a project on social security and research on self-employment.

## **8. Approval of annual report 2018/19**

Sara Hyde (chair, Fabian Women's Network) presented the FWN's report.

Catriona Munro (chair, Scottish Fabians) presented the Scottish Fabians' report.

Andrew Harrop presented highlights of the work of local Fabian Societies.

The annual report was approved.

## **9. Appointment of auditors**

Lord Kennedy, the vice chair and incoming treasurer, proposed that Knox Cropper should be re-appointed as auditors. The meeting agreed.

## **10. Motions**

Lord Kennedy moved a motion revising subscriptions for standard members, concessions, affiliates and local societies, and introducing an inflationary increase for future years.

A number of members spoke in favour of the motion. A number of questions were asked. No members spoke against the motion.

The motion was carried unanimously.

### **11. Jenny Jeger prize for writing**

The annual award for best writing published by the Fabian Society was presented to

*Writing by an author aged under 31*

Amy Longland, Politicising the People

*Short pieces*

1<sup>st</sup> place: Hannah Cooper, Open and Ethical

2<sup>nd</sup> place: David Lindo, The Birds and The Bees

*Full-length reports*

1<sup>st</sup> place: Ben Cooper, Primary Colours

2<sup>nd</sup> place: David Clark, A Warranted Response

### **12. Date of next AGM**

The 2020 AGM will take place on a Saturday in November. The society will explore holding the AGM outside London

### **13. Any Other business**

A member asked a question about the recent EC elections. The general secretary said that a small number of ballot papers had not been enclosed with the Autumn mailing due to an error at the printing house. He apologised to any member who was unable to vote.

#### **Agreed resolution: rule changes**

Proposer: the treasurer and executive committee

#### **Rule 15**

Delete 1st two sentences and replace with: "In 2019/20 the full rate of subscriptions for members and associates shall be £4.90 per month or £58.80 per annum. The concession rate for under-23s, students, low-income pensioners and people receiving out of work benefits shall be £2.50 per month or £30 per annum."

In the 6th sentence change the subscription value for constituency Labour parties from £48 to £30.

Add at the end of the rule: "In each subsequent year prices for all categories will increase by a percentage amount that shall be the higher of earnings or price inflation. In setting these annual increases the executive may round prices up or down as it sees fit (the following year's increase will be calculated with reference to the actual amount)."

#### **Rule 16**

Delete the 2nd to 5th sentences and replace with: "Each local society shall pay an annual affiliation fee to the national society. This fee shall be the same as the annual concessionary rate of subscription for members and associates."