

## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE USS NATIONAL DISPUTES COMMITTEE

Held at UCU Head Office Carlow St. London

7th June 2019

### **ATTENDEES**

#### Elected Members

Andrew Chitty (South East)

Deepa Govindarajan Driver (South)

Gholam Khiabany (London)

Linda Moore (Northern Ireland)

Karen Evans (North West)

Tim Wilson (Scotland)

#### Standing Committees

Shalini Sharma (black members' standing committee)

Megan Povey (women members' standing committee)

Themesa Neckles (disabled members' standing committee)

#### Officials

Christine Haswell (National Pensions Official)

Paul Bridge (Committee Secretary) (for part of meeting)

#### Observer

Dennis Leech (SWG)

#### Guest

Marion Hersh (SWG) (via dial-in for part of meeting)

#### Apologies

Bruce Baker (Northern)

Ryan Prout (LGBT members' standing committee)

Susanne Hakenbeck (Eastern and Home Counties)

Sam Morecroft (anti-casualisation committee)

Rebecca Richards (West Midlands)

### **PROCEEDINGS**

The Chair reported that Rebecca Richards had stepped down from the committee. Jo Grady had also stepped down following her election as General Secretary. It had been agreed by email to reduce the quorum to 7 for this meeting.

The letter from UCU declaring a dispute with employers was circulated and discussed. It was AGREED to make no suggestions for changes.

It was AGREED that NDC should have the opportunity to comment on future formal communications with employers in relation to the USS dispute.

It was AGREED that HEC, NEC, the GS and union officials should see it as important to consult with NDC on all significant decisions relating to the dispute.

It was AGREED that BB be designated as co-chair of NDC along with Deepa Driver.

It was AGREED to invite the GS to the next meeting of NDC to facilitate coordination between NDC and other parts of the union. **(action: DD)**

The SWG meeting, informal UCU-UUK meeting, and formal JNC meeting of 6th June were discussed. The high level of confidentiality now being imposed on JNC negotiators by USS was discussed.

The change in the Articles of Association 27-29 of USS removing the clause that explicitly gave UCU the power to remove its directors on the Trustee board was discussed, as was the absence of consultation within UCU before this change was made. It was AGREED that NDC would defer a further discussion on this till the next meeting. Meanwhile CH would locate a letter that had been exchanged between USS, UUK and UCU on this matter. DL would write a short paper to inform the discussion at the next meeting. **(action: CH, DL)**

The extension of the remit of JEP2 beyond the original ACAS agreement to include a consideration of alternative scheme designs was discussed. It was AGREED that DD would submit the following motion to the next HEC:

HEC notes that the chair of the JEP wrote to UUK and UCU on 9th December 2018 proposing to extend the remit of the JEP beyond the original ACAS agreement by including the paragraph:

"considering questions of risk sharing, including adopting a different approach to contributions (which could, in turn, address issues of intergenerational fairness and equality); examining further the question of mutuality and the question of employer appetite for risk; and the potential for risk sharing."

HEC regrets that SWG agreed to this extension.

HEC instructs the GS and SWG to request that the JEP suspend all work on this aspect of their remit. **(action: DD)**

Ways to respond to the employers' adoption of option 3 were discussed. It was AGREED that a road show in September at which experts in the dispute could address members would be valuable.

It was AGREED that MP would draft a statement to the acting GS, the incoming GS and PB giving suggestions on points for communication to be shared with those responsible for official UCU communications with members. **(action: MP)**

It was AGREED that the quorum of the NDC would be reduced to 6 until replacements for Jo Grady and Rebecca Richards were elected.

It was AGREED to request that the acting GS and incoming GS ensure that facilities time is provided for members of the NDC and of equalities standing committees.

It was AGREED that there should be two standing items on the agenda of every NDC meeting:

- (1) Progress on Conference and Congress motions
- (2) Preparations for strike action

It was AGREED that NDC would request that the membership of SWG be published on the UCU website in the same way as for other union committees. **(action: DD)**

It was noted that the amendment to Congress motion 82 that would have enabled future NDCs to submit motions to Congress and HESCs was not allowed onto the order paper by CBC, and

then the motion as a whole was lost. The motion would be resubmitted by the Democracy Commission to the December Rules Change Congress.

The NDC expressed solidarity with UCU members at striking FE colleges; with Lee Humber at Ruskin College, Dave Muritu at Sandwell College, and Tony Brown at UCL, UCU activists who have been victimised for their trade union work, and with UC branches where redundancies are threatened, especially Leeds Beckett and Bradford University.

#### **NEXT MEETINGS**

19th July, 11-4

23rd August 11-4