

minutes

NEC/16A/11

meeting of: National Executive Council (fifteenth meeting)

place: UNISON Centre, 130 Euston Road, London, NW1 2AY

date and time: 28th November 2011 11am

Members:	Name
President & Chair	Liam Burns
Zones	Toni Pearce & Roshni Joshi (Further Education) Usman Ali & Sophie Richardson (Higher Education); Danielle Grufferty & James Haywood (Society & Citizenship); Ed Marsh & Rebecca Bridger (Union Development); Pete Mercer & Steph Johnson (Welfare)
Liberation	Kanja Sesay & Anil Sachdeo (Black Students); Rupy Kaur & Matthew Bond (Disabled Students); Vicki Baars & Alan Bailey (LGBT); Estelle Hart & Kelley Temple (Womens);
Sections	Christina Yan Zhang & Mateus Wysocki (International Students) Fee Wood (Mature & Part Time Students); George Charonis & Dante Micheaux (Postgraduate Students)
Nations	Luke Young & Raechel Matthey (NUS Wales) Robin Parker & Graeme Kirkpatrick (NUS Scotland); Adrienne Peltz & Stuart Cannell (NUS-USI)
Block	Mark Bergfeld, Nes Cazimoglu, Michael Chessum, Mary Prescott, Lauren Crowley, Matt East, Ruby Hirsch, Taylor Kane, Aaron Kiely, Joe Oliver, Josh Rowlands, Daniel Stevens, Rachel Wenstone, Surya Prakash-Bhatta, Stevie Wise
In attendance:	
Staff	Matt Hyde (Group Chief Executive), Jim Dickinson (Director Policy and Delivery); Vic Langer (Assistant Director Policy and Delivery); Dave Farbrother (Group Finance Director); Jamie Agombar (Ethical and Environmental Manager) Nick Smith (Democratic Services Co-ordinator); Dan Francis (Democratic Services Advisor), Dan Higgins (Acts Representative)
Observers:	
Apologies:	
Zones	
Liberation	Rupy Kaur
Nations	Graeme Kirkpatrick, Adrienne Peltz, Stuart Cannell,
Sections	Dante Micheaux
Block	Surya Prakash-Bhatta, Stevie Wise, Anil Sachdeo
Staff	
Absent without apologies	Matthew Bond

minutes

1. Introductory & Administration

- 1.1 Liam Burns (LB) opened the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies were *noted*.
- 1.3 There were no declarations of interests.
- 1.4 Vicki Baars (VB) noted that George Charonis was incorrectly listed as having attended the UJS trip twice.
- 1.5 There were no matters arising.

2. Reports and accountability

- 2.1 LB: presented his report.

The NEC discussed NUS support for and involvement in the National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts (NCAFC) 9th of November demonstration. Liam Burns (LB) explained the delays in risk assessing adding that it was important to ensure that any measures outlined in the risk assessment were turned into action on the day.

Michael Chessum (MC) argued the NCAFC demonstration had been a success, however MC suggested that the demonstration had been a missed opportunity for NUS. Mark Bergfeld (MB) asked if LB accepted that NUS was lacking a strategy to combat the white paper. LB responded by outlining that a mandate for a demonstration was rejected by national conference 2011. LB accepted that there was a policy vacuum in regards to what we want out of the forthcoming HE Bill, and that he would take action to rectify this by the new year. NUS intends to campaign on winning concessions and amendments in the Bill itself.

Matt East (ME) raised concerns that some universities are still not involving students' unions on the development of access agreements. LB agreed to look at the work NUS is developing in the area.

NEC discussed the approach NUS had taken to mobilising students and demonstrating support for industrial action due to take place on the 30th of November. LB outlined the strategies which NUS had used over the last month to inform and engage the membership. LB highlighted the importance of not hijacking the purpose of the action suggesting this could undermine the impact of strikes. Luke Young (LY) suggested that NUS should issue practical advice to the membership on how students can support, without distracting from, the action such as fundraising and standing alongside strikers.

Danielle Grufferty (DG) arrived at NEC.

- 2.2 The Zone Convenors presented their reports. There were the following questions and issues arising.

Higher Education – Usman Ali (UA) highlighted that the current priority for NSS ambassadors was FE unions with HE provision and that each NSS ambassador should be visiting with an FE union to support them in using their results. UA also agreed to look into how NUS can better support unions to engage in debates about Post Graduate fee setting.

minutes

Union Development – Ed Marsh (EM) introduced his report and outlined recent referenda success in Brighton and Reading and urged NEC to help support the upcoming referendum in Brunel.

Society and Citizenship – Danielle Grufferty (DG) introduced her report and the NEC were invited to ask questions.

Further Education – Toni Pearce (TP) introduced her report and outlined the launch of the Care to Learn campaign.

Welfare – Pete Mercer (PM) introduced his report and NEC were invited to ask questions.

All Zone reports were *approved*.

2.3 The Liberation Officers presented their reports to *note*.

2.4 The Sections presented their reports to *note*.

2.5 The Nations presented their reports to *note*.

2.6 There were no reports or notices from Scrutiny or Special Groups

2.7 The Block raised the following issues:

Aaron Kiely (AK) noted how the day of NEC was critical to the Save UEA music campaign and urged NEC support. He congratulated NUS-USI on its recent no platform work.

Josh Rowlands (JR) asked if the block could receive an allocation of all FE constituent members in order to ensure these issues were fed back. EM noted the importance of the allocation and agreed that the FE allocation would be circulated shortly.

RW highlighted that many of her constituent members were choosing to prioritise community campaigns work.

LB amended the agenda to take items in a different order.

3. Motions and Proposals

3.3 ES8 Membership & Affiliation Strategy Review

EM introduced the report, adding that NUS's relationship with membership was critical, not simply because of finances, but because the relationships are central to everything that NUS does. EM highlighted that ES8 was the first step in formalising the way NUS interacts with its membership.

NEC discussed the need for individual benefits statements to do more than just demonstrate financial benefit. EM agreed that developing benefit statements was key to preventing referenda and educating officers. EM added that as part of the Membership & Affiliation Strategy NUS would start mapping the unions which are engaging and those which are not.

NEC then discussed the strategy for non-affiliate unions and the program of re-engagement. Estelle Hart (EH) highlighted issue of allowing access and opportunities for non-affiliated unions without offering the full benefits of membership, LB agreed that it was a difficult balance and something that NUS had to get right.

NEC noted ES8 Membership & Affiliation Strategy Review

For the latest news follow @NUSNEC and visit www.nusconnect.org.uk/nusnec

minutes

NEC broke for lunch

Sophie Richardson (SR) arrived at NEC.

LB amended the agenda to take items in a different order.

UA left NEC at this point.

3.6 ES4 Ethical & Environmental Strategy Review

DG introduced the paper and the importance of NUS's Ethical & Environmental Strategy. DG outlined how students unions are engaging with the Green Impact project to achieve either a bronze, silver or gold award. The Green Impact team are working with 600 departments in different institutions.

NEC discussed the importance of developing a broader ethical agenda in particular relation to issues such as ethical banking and workers rights.

DG highlighted that NUS were developing a toolkit for governors and trustees to ask questions of their institutions on embedding sustainability into the curriculum. She also discussed the consultancy work that the Green Impact team now undertake around sustainable design in refurbishments and new builds.

NEC noted ES4 Ethical & Environmental Strategy Review

3.4 Report on Estimates progress

LB introduced the paper and stated that he would be meeting with the conveners to discuss campaigns work in early January. LB asked the NEC take note of the paper and that campaigns feed in if they feel more funds would be needed in a particular area.

NEC noted Report on Estimates progress

3.5 Learning and Development plan for ODP 2012

EM introduced the paper highlighting that feedback from last year was excellent. EM added that the key change is to develop a year round, rather than summer based, training program. EM invited NEC to feed back on the proposed program.

NEC discussed the challenges with FE officer engagement given the timings of the program. RP suggested seeking accreditation for the course to add real value outside of the student movement. James Haywood (JH) suggested that a session on widening participation be added to the program.

NEC approved the Learning and Development plan for ODP 2012

3.7 Strategic Partnership between NUS and London Citizens/Citizens UK

DG introduced the paper. NEC agreed that there was benefit in both affiliating to London Citizens/Citizens UK and undertaking a training partnership officers, with the view to a long term strategic partnership following a review. NEC approved the expenditure of £5000 from the relevant budgets.

NEC approved the Strategic Partnership between NUS and London Citizens/Citizens UK
For the latest news follow @NUSNEC and visit www.nusconnect.org.uk/nusnec

minutes

3.10 Motions and Amendments

Motions 1: Ahava

Speech for: JH
Speech against: none
Summation: JH
Vote: Motion Passes

Motions 2: A new phase of police and legal repression: rubber bullets and political prisoners

Speech for: MC
Speech against: None
Vote: Motion Passes

The NEC received a presentation from Joel Bodmer, Chair of Unison Young Members Forum.

Motions 3: The Vice-Chancellors' Pledge

Speech for: MC
Speech against: RP
Speech for: MB
Speech against: EM

Parts: Remove NEC resolves 2,
Speech for: MC
Speech against: RP
Vote: Parts removed

Summation: MC
Vote: Motion falls

Motion 4: Support striking public sector workers

Speech for: AK

LB wished to remind NEC that the South East Region of the TUC (SERTUC) have explicitly said they don't want students to run a feeder march.

Speech against: DG
Speech for: VB
Speech against: RP

Vicki Baars (VB) challenge to the impartiality of LB as chair. LB rescinds the chair to TP.

Parts: Remove NEC resolves 1
Speech for: LY
Speech against: AB

Keep	James Haywood, Kanja Sesay, Vicki Baars,
------	--

minutes

	Alan Bailey, Mark Bergfeld, Michael Chessum, Ruby Hirsch, Aaron Kiely
Remove	Robin Parker, Danielle Grufferty, Nes Cazimoglu, Estelle Hart, Ed Marsh, Rebecca Bridger, Joe Oliver, Pete Mercer, Sophie Richardson, Josh Rowlands, Taylor Kane, Matt East, Fee Wood, Christina Yan Zhang, George Charonis, Steph Johnson, Daniel Stevens, Rachel Wenstone, Lauren Crowley, Liam Burns, Roshni Joshi, Mary Prescott, Luke Young, Raechel Matthey
Abstentions	Kelley Temple, Mateus Wysocki

Recorded vote: 8 Keep, 24 Remove 2 Abstentions

Vote: Parts removed

Summation: AK

Recorded vote: Unanimous vote in favour

Vote: Motion passes parts removed

LB returns to chair

Withdrawal of motion 5, National Spring Demonstration, by the proposer. Approved by NEC.

Meeting closed 4.10pm

DRAFT

resolutions

Motion: Ahava

NEC believes:

1. King's College London is involved in a research project with Ahava Dead Sea Laboratories.
2. Ahava is a commercial company located in the illegal Israeli settlement of Mitzpe Shalem, and is also partly owned by the council of this illegal settlement, located approximately 10km inside occupied Palestinian territory in the West Bank.
3. Israeli settlements are illegal under rulings of the International Court of Justice, UN resolution 446, the Fourth Geneva Convention, and, overwhelmingly, the international community, including the EU and the UK.
4. Since the settlement of Mitzpe Shalem is illegal, Ahava is essentially stealing what should be resources available for use by the Palestinians inside the West Bank.
5. By accruing profits from, and sustaining itself on, an illegal settlement, Ahava is complicit in violations of international law.
6. It is widely accepted that settlements are a crucial obstacle to peace in the region
7. Following the overwhelming declarations of support from the University of London Union and King's College London Student Union, students and staff involved in the campaign at King's have asked the NUS to seek a nationwide call of support

NEC further believes:

1. By collaborating with Ahava, King's itself has become complicit with violations of international law, consenting to the company's position in relation to the illegal settlement and its theft of resources.
2. It is unacceptable and self-defeating for an academic institution to lend legitimacy to, and actively work with, an entity that owes its current state of existence to violations of international law.
3. The damaging international controversy surrounding the LSE's links with Saif al-Islam Gaddafi highlights the need for institutions to be prudent with their academic relationships and to adhere to strict ethical principles

NEC Resolves:

1. To condemn the collaboration between King's College London and Ahava in the research project, and demand the immediate end of the university's involvement in the project, and the rejection of the financial grant King's has received for its participation.
2. To strongly urge King's College London to re-evaluate its commitments to ethical research, and establish a formal ethical research policy, to prevent a similar situation from arising in the future that compromises the university's integrity and respect for international law.
3. To support the campaign led by academics and students at King's, in order to achieve the above aims.

Motion: A new phase of police and legal repression: rubber bullets and political prisoners

NEC believes:

1. That on the November 9th national demonstration, organised by the National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts, the Metropolitan Police threatened to deploy rubber bullets if it was felt that they were necessary; and adopted a policy of 'total policing' with 4000 police on the streets, including the deployment of both horses and dogs; undercover snatch squads; and the enforcement of sections of the Public Order Act which banned off route protests.

For the latest news follow @NUSNEC and visit www.nusconnect.org.uk/nusnec

resolutions

2. That since November 10th 2010, there have been numerous arrests and prosecutions of student demonstrators, with many being jailed for lengthy periods of time – for instance Frankie Fernie, who received a 12 month sentence for throwing sticks.
3. That Edd Bauer, VP Education at Birmingham Guild, was remanded in custody for 10 days prior to trial for doing a banner drop.
4. That state repression of emerging social movements has occurred by legal and policing means many times before – from the poll tax protests to the trade union movement.
5. That there are more than 100 student and anticuts protesters still awaiting trial for jail-able offences.

NEC further believes:

1. That the behaviour of the police in threatening to fire rubber bullets at students on the November 9th protest was a disgrace: it was a political attempt to systematically scare off students (including school students) from demonstrating for the future of their education and their society.
2. That the police have on numerous occasions engaged in the pre-criminalisation of protests by ramping up the threat of violence in advance of demonstrations, thereby increasing the likelihood of violence occurring and legitimising their use of heavy force.
3. That the presence of violence on demonstrations is not a result of external infiltration, but a result of real, and often provoked, anger and a failure of the democratic process.
4. That the student movement now has political prisoners: people who are, or will be, sent to jail for extremely long periods of time not because of they pose a corresponding danger to society, or the ethical nature of their crime, but because their (alleged) acts took place in a political context.
5. That the case of Edd Bauer's banner drop, as well as the use of the charge of violent disorder in other cases, illustrates the political use of the legal system to target political dissent.
6. That it is a fundamental duty of all serious political movements to defend political prisoners.
7. That in protest situations the police are a political organisation, not a neutral arbiter.

NEC resolves:

1. To publicly write to the Home Secretary calling for a review of the sentencing of student and anticuts protesters, and to call on university managements to do likewise.
2. To release a statement condemning the threat of rubber bullets and the 'total policing' of the 9th November national demo.
3. To ask Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International to look into policing and sentencing of recent student and anticuts protests.

Motion: Support striking public sector workers

NEC believes:

1. Up to 3 million public sector workers will take strike action on the 30 November – in a day of action called by the TUC - to defend their pensions which are under attack from Tory plans which seek to force them to work longer, pay more and receive less.
2. Rallies and marches are being organised across the country in support of the strike, including a march in London. A broad range of student organisations have united to organise a student feeder march to support those public sector workers taking industrial action to defend their pensions and oppose the government's savage cuts agenda.

NEC further believes:

1. NUS already has policy to support public sector strikes, and this should be acted upon.

resolutions

2. The Tory-led government is making students, public sector workers and ordinary people pay for a crisis they did not create - at the same time they are defending the top 1%. Last month's announcement that pay for the directors of the UK's top businesses rose by 49% over the past year is further evidence that we are not "all in this together."

NEC resolves:

1. To support student unions and student anticuts groups in their local peaceful actions for supporting the strikes on 30th November.

DRAFT