



# Newark & District Branch Labour Party

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## Minutes of meeting held at Chesters, Main Street, Balderton on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2008 at 7.30PM

1. Ian Campbell welcomed all attendees to the meeting. **Present:** Ian Campbell (Chair), Kevin Cocker (Regional Office), Laurence Goff, Margaret Granger (Guest), Leonard Hall, Doug Hough, Brian Howes, Maggie Johnstone, Olga Newstead, Paul Newstead, Carola Richards, David Roberts, Ray Rouse (Guest), Janet Welsh, Clive Wetton (Secretary)

**Apologies:** John Clark, Ivan Jarunek, Peter Parker

2. **Minutes** of the previous meeting were approved.

### **Matters Arising:**

Meeting venue – Clive reported that we have paid the Castle & Falcon £200 for the last two years' room hire. Olga has managed to obtain the function room at Chesters free of charge. All agreed that it is an excellent venue.

Treasurer – Paul Tate has handed over the books and we will select a new Treasurer at today's meeting.

Item 5a – Magnus District Council by-election was won by the Tories but with less than 50% of the vote. The anti-Tory vote was possibly split by both the Independents and the Lib Dems fielding a candidate.

Item 5b – Despite knocking on nearly every door in the Beacon Ward, Laurence Goff was defeated by the Tories by 252 on a turnout of only 17.92%.

3. **Correspondence:** Clive read out a press release issued to the Newark Advertiser announcing Ian Campbell as the Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for the Newark Constituency.
4. **Election of Treasurer and approval of bank signatories:** Brian Howes (Newark CLP Treasurer) has agreed to take on the role of Branch Treasurer until the next AGM. He was proposed by Clive Wetton and seconded by Olga Newstead. The meeting unanimously approved Brian's appointment. Clive Wetton proposed Brian Howes, Ian Campbell and Olga Newstead as the new branch bank account signatories. Doug Hough seconded and the new signatories were unanimously approved by the meeting.
5. **Officer Reports:** All relevant matters are dealt with elsewhere on the agenda.
6. **Local issues:**
  - a. **Future Guest Speakers:** Ian said that he hadn't pressed for a Guest Speaker for this meeting because of the holiday period but he was pleasantly surprised by the

attendance. He believes that we should have a speaker at most meetings to inform and to stimulate debate. He asked the meeting for suggestions for future guest speakers. A comprehensive and varied list was suggested by the members including County Councillors, NGO representatives, Trade Union officials, local MPs and local charities. Maggie asked how future meetings would be publicised because, in the absence of written invitations, those members without e-mail only find out about the meetings because Laurence calls them. Ian confirmed that he and Clive will devise a better communication strategy in time for the next meeting.

b. **Growth Point:** Ian gave a quick introduction to the local Growth Point bid which was expanded by Kevin. There was a lengthy and interesting debate on the subject. The main points to emerge from the debate were:

- The information provided by Newark & Sherwood District Council, in particular Roger Blaney, is extremely vague. This is a major cause for concern as it leaves local people feeling that they are not being properly consulted.
- The consultation that did take place was poorly presented almost to the point of trying to hide the facts behind glossy presentation.
- There is some local opposition to the plans but no unified voice fighting for more information. The Newark Advertiser has printed an occasional letter on the subject but there have been few, if any, articles published.
- We need to decide on a strategy to press for more information and call for a proper debate on the subject.

7. **Regional Update:** Kevin announced that Regional Office have appointed him to oversee the County Council Election Candidate selection process for the four seats in the Newark area e.g. Balderton, Farndon & Muskham, Newark East and Newark West. Currently only two local members, Ian and Laurence, are on the panel of prospective candidates. Leonard asked if anything was being done to increase the number of local members who wish to stand. Kevin said that we need to publicise within the party that we have two very winnable seats in Newark to generate more interest. However he believes that there will be sufficient candidates to have a good, competitive selection process.

8. **Any Other Business:**

- a. Kevin reminded members that the Balderton & Farndon Branch still officially exists and needs to be dealt with asap by the CLP in consultation with local members.
- b. Date of next Branch Meeting – Monday 20<sup>th</sup> October at 7:30PM at Chesters as all agreed that it is an excellent venue.

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 9:00PM.