
**MINUTES OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE 2020/2022 COUNCIL HELD
ON ZOOM ON TUESDAY 6TH OCTOBER 2020**

- 3.1 Announcements**
- 3.2 Corrections to the Draft Minutes of Council 2**
- 3.3 Matters Arising from the Draft Minutes of Council 2**
- 3.4 Industrial**
- 3.5 Communications Review and Political Update**
- 3.6 Finance**
- 3.7 SRC**
- 3.8 Equality**
- 3.9 Trustee**
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- 3.11 Legal Cases**
- 3.12 Membership**
- 3.13 Any Other Business**

Councillors Present: Maureen Beattie (President, in the Chair), Dan Ayling, Melanie La Barrie, Ian Barritt, Xander Black, Kelly Burke, Julia Carson Sims, Di Christian, Jackie Clune (Vice-President), Bryn Evans (Honorary Treasurer), Nick Fletcher, Stephanie Greer, Maureen Hibbert, Dawn Hope, Isabella Jarrett, David John, Mary Lane, Maggie McCarthy, Alan McKee, Leila Mimmack, Hywel Morgan, Dan de la Motte, Rhubarb the Clown, Jean Rogers, Lynda Rooke (Vice-President), Sally Treble, Paul Valentine and Flora Wellesley Wesley.

Staff Present: Paul W Fleming (General Secretary), Stephen Spence (Senior Deputy for the General Secretary), Matt Hood (Deputy for the General Secretary, MOA), Louise McMullan (Deputy for the General Secretary, CPC), John Barclay (Assistant General Secretary, RM), Hilary Hadley (Assistant General Secretary, LP), Ian Manborde (Equalities and Diversity Organiser) and Sam Winter (Council Secretary).

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Apologies for Absence: Jamie Byron, Nicholas Keegan, Emmanuel Kojo and Sam Swann.

3.1 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- 3.1.1 Sam Winter presented a reminder of the meeting guidance.
- 3.1.2 The President welcomed Paul W Fleming to his first Council meeting as our new General Secretary. The General Secretary said that this was not quite the job that he had applied for – we were in the middle of one of the the greatest crises our society, economy and our industry had ever faced. The next six months would be incredibly tough, but he found great encouragement in the collective dedication of the members, activists, Councillors and staff.
- 3.1.3 The President paid tribute to the life of Joan Blackham, a personal friend of hers. As well as being a stalwart of the West and Southwest London General Branch, she was on Council from 1994-2000, on the Women’s Committee from 2005-2013, and on the Appeals Committee from 2012-2014. She was remarkable, and her efforts on behalf of members were extraordinary. She had first met her on a production of King Lear, and had been astonished by her from their first meeting. She would be very badly missed by so many people.

Jean Rogers said that she hoped her obituary in the magazine would be a fitting tribute. She had been a sister on the Women’s Committee, and had helped enormously with the fight for gender balance within the Council – which had first been achieved in 2010. She was wonderful, and left a big hole in all of our lives.

The Council held a minute’s silence in her memory, and gave her a final standing ovation.

3.2 **CORRECTIONS TO THE DRAFT MINUTES OF COUNCIL 2**

Minute 2.6.1 STAFF AND OFFICES – Staff and Management Structure

Under "Points made in discussion" bullet point 5 - change the full stop at the end of the bullet point to a comma and add "and said that she owed him a personal note of thanks for his support and guidance when she became a Vice-President and then President."

Minute 2.18 EQUITY POKER TOURNAMENT

“addiction” not “addition”.

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Minute 2.21.1 ANY OTHER BUSINESS – Christine Payne, Honorary Life Membership

On the fifth line, it should read “equalities structures”, plural.

The Draft Minutes were **proposed** by Mary Lane, **seconded** by Dan Ayling and **AGREED** unanimously as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

3.3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE DRAFT MINUTES OF COUNCIL 2

3.3.1 Minute 2.4.2 ELECTIONS – Council Appointees

Jean Rogers, speaking as Chair of both BECS and the ECT, said that at their recent BECS board meeting, they had been delighted to welcome Dawn Hope as Council’s new appointee. And at the recent ECT Trustees meeting, they had also been delighted to welcome Melanie La Barrie and Maureen Hibbert as Council’s new appointees.

3.3.2 Minute 2.18, EQUITY POKER TOURNAMENT

The President said that although our name would not be attached to the event in any way, they had still decided to give the money to our Benevolent Fund. Bryn Evans, Honorary Treasurer, said that our general policy was that we were happy for the Fund to receive money from any source.

3.4 INDUSTRIAL

3.4.1 Recorded Media

John Barclay said that the SNMC had met on 29th September.

He said that we were very close to securing an SVoD agreement with Disney+. This would be the first agreement Disney had reached with any Union in the world.

In gaming, we had convened a meeting with the studios with a view to reaching a collectively bargained agreement between us and the studios. We were also consulting with SAG-AFTRA on the possibility of reaching a global agreement for gaming. He said that the members had been absolutely fantastic, taking control of their work and engaging with their employers.

He was working towards a revision of the multiple agreements we had with the BPI, and the good news was that they were willing to engage with us.

Enforcement of the supporting artists agreement continued, with a meeting coming up to look at areas of particular concern. We were seeing reports of unacceptable deductions being made from members’ pay. We were also

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putting together a charter for respect and dignity at work for supporting artists across the audio-visual industry.

We were facing some major issues regarding late notice for self-taping. We would shortly be surveying members to clarify the specific problems, and the options available to resolve this. One option would be to impose a requirement of providing a minimum of 48 hours' notice, but imposing this would not be without its challenges.

He said that the closure of Cineworld in the UK was a shocking loss. We would be sending a message of support to effected colleagues in other unions. He anticipated that Netflix, Apple, Disney, etc., may make attempts to buy up cinema screens in the future.

Points made in discussion:

- A Councillor said that when members complained to the casting directors about the short deadlines for self-taping, they blamed the producers. *Reply – John Barclay said that it was a real problem, not just with producers. The problem lay with the whole production food chain. No one wanted late notice self-taping, but the issue appeared to be the extra demands of the Covid measures, which were causing delays across the whole system. At the bottom of the food chain, our members were being hit with unacceptable demands. We had to look at how we could fight back and protect members.*
- A Councillor said that this was creating a climate of bullying, with members facing unacceptable pressure and micro-aggressions to get their self-tapes back in line with very tight deadlines.
- The President asked when it had become the norm for us to have to learn all of the lines for an audition – this had not always been a requirement, why was it necessary now? Other Councillors concurred, and said that further clarity was needed, including on why self-tapes increasingly involved full costume. One Councillor suggested using Zoom for auditioning as a more interactive and satisfying process, which would treat participants with more dignity.
- John Barclay acknowledged a written question from a Councillor referring to what could be done about growing resentment towards Spotlight, its cost and monopoly, particularly in the time of Covid when there was so little work around. Lynda Rooke, Vice-President, said that she found Spotlight to be a slightly dated institution, and that there was a growing swell of feeling demanding that they sort themselves out. She was starting to wonder whether their monopoly should be challenged. *Reply – John Barclay said that he would be having a conversation with Spotlight about the issues there.*
- Jackie Clune, Vice-President, asked whether there was anything in our agreements about Covid testing. *Reply – John Barclay said that there should be provisions in contracts re: GDPR/data protection as Covid tests involved personal information, and also ensuring that employers covered any out of pocket expenses incurred in taking tests.*

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3.4.2 Live Performance

Hilary Hadley said that the producers in the West End were forecasting disastrous losses. Against that background, the Working Party entered into negotiations for achieving an agreement to give our members a chance at starting work again – though there was no guarantee that they would be able to start again. Given the uncertainties and reductions in audience numbers, and the cost of performances, the producers had asked for temporary variations to be able to pro-rate by number of performances, and to be able to work Sundays (they believe they can maximise the chances of getting audiences in on Sundays, due to lower capacity on public transport.)

She had sent the full ballot paper around the West End members and the Council the previous day. The Working Party and the Deputies had abided by confidentiality, so this was the first many members had seen of this.

She said that we had to recognise that the producers would put on as many shows as they could, and once we were back to eight, then the pro-rating provision would effectively have fallen away. The Sunday performances would not be forever, but would be around until the West End economy was fighting fit again.

Points made in discussion:

- A Councillor said that he found the communications around the ballot very clear. He had, though, been taken aback by the time period of the variation agreement. He knew that there was a provision for it to be cut short, should box office improve, but he wondered how this would be decided. *Reply – Hilary Hadley said that they were predicting it could last until January 2022. This was because members were not likely to go back to work until spring 2021, which meant that there was no way that box office figures were going to improve until several months after that point. We would be looking at the combined box office figures across the whole West End to make any determinations as to when the variation agreement should be ended, and it would not be decided on a case by case basis, with discrepancies between different shows.*
- A Councillor said that in any time of difficulty, ensemble members and minority ethnic members would always be the worst affected. We had to be sensitive to this in our communications, and we had to ensure that we were always fighting for our most vulnerable members. We had to be clear and robust in upholding the commitments within our Four Pillars Plan.
- A Councillor said that the videos had been a really effective way of communicating what could have been a quite terrifying and mystifying document and process. We had to remember to communicate from the heart as well.
- A Councillor concurred that communication was vital here. No one was happy to have to communicate this to the members, as the headlines

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were grim. But the Working Party, the Deputies and the Stage Committee were clear that this was necessary, and that we had to fight to retain our collective agreement. He asked that we ask SOLT to honour our Four Pillars Plan, and ensure that our least privileged members were not adversely impacted.

- The General Secretary said that Councillors could expect to come under some pressure over this variation. If they had any questions or concerns, they should go to him, Hilary Hadley, Charlotte Bence or Amy Dawson. He said that they had done magnificent work to get us to this point, and had come under horrendous pressure, including the threat of the destruction of our life's work in the form of withdrawing from our collective agreement. Members were not aware of the alternative scenarios which SOLT had put on the table, and which we had successfully fought off. In the end, we had made two concessions – it was painful stuff, but the truth was that the alternatives were far worse, and we should be under no illusions as to how bad things could get. This was why we were recommending accepting the deal, as supported by 77% of our Deputies, and our Stage Committee. We were doing the right thing in being open and honest with our members as to why we were doing this, and that was because we believed the alternatives were worse. The macro picture was that with members in workplaces, we could be active and hold the managers to account. With members sat at home, we could do nothing, and our agreements would be under threat the whole time. It could not be overemphasised just how serious this was, and just how good a job the Working Party had done in getting us to this point.

On Variety, Hilary Hadley referred to her written report. In addition, she said that various London Councils were trying to stop street performances, and we had written to them to insist on consultation and to push back on this. They had agreed to suspend the implementation until they met with us.

3.4.3 SOLT/UKT Equalities Conference

The General Secretary said that SOLT and UKT were organising a “Truth and Healing” conference, specifically to address the concerns of those in the industry who experienced racism. They had launched it the previous week, and he wanted to explain why we were not a partner at this point. They had asked us to contribute £5,000 to the conference, where there would be no discussion of terms and conditions, and where the experiences of our members would be heard in closed session. We were not willing to support an event where the terms were dictated by the employers, and so we would not be contributing financially. Some very good union activists were involved, and we were in touch with them directly. If the employers wanted to listen, then let's hope some good would come of it.

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3.5 COMMUNICATIONS REVIEW AND POLITICAL UPDATE

3.5.1 Communications Review

Louise McMullan said that the communications review was progressing well. First refusal had been offered to various members for our upcoming focus groups, to look at the whole spectrum of our communications activity. Councillors would be invited to take part in these in the coming days.

We would be rolling out a survey later in the month, with particular questions targeted at our younger members. The paper outlined the key headings as to some of the key findings of the review so far.

The first meeting of the Communications Working Party had been a great success, with great representation from Variety, from across the regions and nations, and from those with concerns and ideas around accessibility. We wanted to be the best union out there in terms of accessibility, and also in terms of the interest and impact of our communications.

On budget and staffing, she said that we had currently identified £30,000-40,000 of spend on work which we believed we could bring in-house, perhaps by bringing in a permanent employee to take on these functions. We had also aimed to save £80,000-90,000 this year, for the good of the union.

Points made in discussion:

- A Councillor said that there was a particular problem with our communication with Variety members. He said that new Variety members were down, Variety members were leaving, and we needed to step up our communications with them in order to combat this. *Reply – the General Secretary said that one concern had been the inability of the union to provide a generic answer to specific situations. The unhappiness he had heard from entertainers had been related the content of communications on this, which unfortunately was down to the guidance from the government. He would speak to Louise McMullan about our specific communications for our Variety members, and was sure that this was part of the ongoing review. Reply – the Councillor responded that he accepted the General Secretary's comments, but suggested that if we were more proactive with communicating our lobbying efforts for Variety members, this would greatly help.*

3.5.2 Political Update

Louise McMullan said that the previous week's Panto Parade had received an enormous amount of positive press coverage. She thanked Councillors for their support in taking part on the day, either in person at the march or on the live stream to members.

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The government were saying that creative workers should go and retrain if they couldn't find work at the moment. This was unacceptable, and we were working out how to push back on this. In our recent survey, 80% of members felt that their job prospects were very negative over the next six months, and 70% over the next 12 months. We would be presenting this evidence to the government in the coming weeks, along with testimony as to how this was affecting particularly vulnerable members.

3.5.3 Alliance for Full Employment

The General Secretary said that he had been contacted by former Prime Minister Gordon Brown to ask that we join the Alliance for Full Employment. This was a campaign being led by Gordon Brown, various metro mayors, and numerous community groups. They had not specifically referenced our sector, our industries, or the self-employed in their demands, and so he had responded to say that he would be supportive providing they incorporated these provisions within their demands, and talk about how our industry should be a cornerstone of a new, sustainable economy. The Mirror were backing the campaign, and so it would give us opportunity to talk about what viable jobs would look like in the future, and to raise the profile of our members as working people and our industry in the context of the broader economy.

3.6 FINANCE

3.6.1 3rd quarter 2020 Budget

Bryn Evans, Honorary Treasurer, referred to his written report. The headline figures were:

Income	£8,525,888
Expenditure	£9,400,839
Deficit	- £874,950

He said that it was not a surprise that we were projecting an end-of-year deficit. Given the decision of Council to place £1 million within the Benevolent Fund, this was always to be expected. The position had improved since the last budget update in June and may improve further by the end of December. But there would still be an operating deficit.

Note 1: We had revised the figure for subscription income to £5,920,000. This was calculated on the subs income we had received in the first 9 months of the year and our best guess on what would happen in the last 3 months.

Note 3: We were hopeful that we may receive more than £1,340,000 from ERA. However, as we did not have accurate details, we had left this figure unchanged. The figure for income from distributions had been reduced to £240,000. This figure may be exceeded by the end of December but that was

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not certain. We had estimated that donations to the Benevolent Fund should achieve £285,000. Overall the figure for Note 3 had increased to £1,881,000.

Note 4: The overall figure had increased to £392,830 owing to revised figures received from our two investment managers.

Note 6: Advertising in the Magazine had reduced to £8,000 following the decision to have only 3 Magazines this year. The write-back of old balances had also reduced from £50,000 to £37,500. Overall the figure for Note 6 had reduced from £347,075 to £332,058.

Note 7: Overall staff costs had increased from £4,303,526 to £4,409,936. The major increase was the movement in provision for holiday pay which had increased from £2,000 to £140,000. This was a consequence of the pandemic and the need for staff not to build up too much unused holiday entitlement. There were reductions re both National Insurance and pension contributions.

Note 8a: As shown earlier, we expected expenditure from the Benevolent Fund to be £1,285,000.

Note 8b: Expenditure on the Magazine had reduced from £250,100 to £179,000.

Note 8d: Legal aid had reduced from £210,000 to £155,000.

Note 8f: We had increased the sum relating to the audit of US film studios to £50,000. It was expected that this money would be reimbursed to Equity in future years.

Note 8: Overall the figure for Note 8 had reduced from £2,334,617 to £2,288,081.

Note 9: We had budgeted to spend £80,000 on a physical ARC or SRC; we now expected to spend a total of £10,000. Overall the figure for Note 9 had reduced from £159,063 to £90,263.

Note 10: Administrative expenses had reduced from £450,920 to £432,880.

Note 13: Overall organising expenses had reduced from £219,056 to £186,625. This was a direct consequence of there being no physical meetings and only virtual meetings taking place.

Note 14: Our professional costs had increased. We paid our auditors, BDO, £47,700 for extra services outside their normal activity around our annual accounts. Accounting services increased to £97,500 as a consequence of extra weekly finance meetings to monitor the union's cashflow. Overall our professional costs increased from £454,971 to £520,253.

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Note 15: Property and equipment costs decreased slightly from £566,724 to £558,903.

As stated earlier, it was always expected that we would have an operating deficit in 2020 given the impact of the pandemic. The position had improved somewhat since June and, with luck, the projected deficit would reduce a little further by the end of the year.

Points made in discussion:

- A Councillor said that we were forecasting our distribution income to go down – were we expecting that to be a long-term change? *Reply – Matt Hood said that we did not know when large payments would come in, as they were irregular and unpredictable. At present this year, the number of those large, one-off payments, was not as much as it had been last year, which was why the income had been revised down (in order to be prudent rather than ambitious).*
- A Councillor asked why mobile phone costs had gone up substantially this year. *Reply – Matt Hood said that in the switch to remote working, we had been required to equip every staff member with a mobile phone (previously, only those on the higher grades had them).*
- Lynda Rooke, Vice-President, asked why there had not been a larger reduction in our organising costs. *Reply – the General Secretary said there were certain events/meetings included in the budget that may or may not occur, depending on how things continued to be impacted by the pandemic. He added that these costs were included to ensure that should these go ahead, they were accounted for in the budget.*

3.6.2 Income/Expenditure

Matt Hood referred to his written report. He said that our main source of income was through subscriptions. Our subscriptions income had gone down for September year on year by 5.66%. The trend of gradual decrease year on year had continued, and we were now just 0.54% ahead on income for the first nine months of 2020 when compared with the first nine months of 2019. The average decrease over the past three months had been 4%, and so the prediction for the remaining three months of the year was for a 4% decrease each month.

The amount spent on salaries was predicted to fall for the remainder of 2020, due to the retirement of Pauline Yip and Christine Payne.

We were now due to take the remainder of the income from the distributions service, and would receive the remainder of the monies owed by the ERA at the end of October.

We had taken subscriptions yesterday, and so the Co-op bank balance was now healthier than at the time of the paper.

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3.6.3 Save London Theatres Campaign

Matt Hood said that the bank account was now zero. John Levitt and Johnny Worthy, the remaining trustees of the SLTC, had now decided to contribute the remaining funds to the Benevolent Fund, totalling £8,265.76.

3.6.4 Report and Recommendations of the FSWP

3.6.4.1 Income Review 2021

The General Secretary said that this would involve a painful set of decisions for Council. He said that it was necessary to make this decision now, so that the decision related to subscriptions rises could go to the SRC in November.

Originally, Council had proposed a subscriptions rise of 2%. This was well before the effects of the crisis had completely changed the financial situation of the economy and of the union. We were projecting that subscriptions income would likely go down next year. This was due to the fact that members were currently out of work, and more members may well find themselves out of work across the next year. We were required to set the subscriptions rise for next year without the full knowledge of how many members we may lose over that year. This meant we had to predict what may happen, and set the subscriptions rise accordingly.

He noted that our normal structure had joining and rejoining fees, which it was proposed should be waived for the next period, to allow any members who had left due to Covid or for any other reason to rejoin.

On our other sources of income, the stock market was turbulent and so our investment income was down, and income from our distributions service was also down. In the medium and long-term, one of his commitments was to break our dependence on the income from the ERA. This was because, at some point in the future, technology would allow for the distribution of that money, and so it would be lost as income to the union.

We had made significant savings by way of a reduction in management costs, the communications review, the removal of one magazine this year, a full review of our contracts, placing a significant number of our staff on furlough, and a proposed staff pay freeze (subject to negotiation with staff union reps).

These recommendations were devised by the General Secretary, supported by the FSWP, supported by the Officers, and we were now asking Council to support them being put to the SRC. He said that the history of trades unionism was littered with the bodies of General Secretaries who wished to remain popular, and so did not do anything to address subscriptions when it was required of them. These were unprecedented times, and it was vital to take difficult decisions in order to protect the union.

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Bryn Evans, Honorary Treasurer, said that the recommendations had been supported unanimously by the members of the FSWP and the Officers. None of us wanted to go down this road, but if we did nothing, we risked losing control of our finances and Equity losing its identity as an independent trade union.

Recommendations:

The Officers and the Financial Stability Working Party make the following recommendations to Council:

- **That the Council puts the following motion to the Special Representative Conference 2020:**

Equity's normal practice is to seek approval from each year's ARC for a rise in subscription rates that is close to the expected rate of inflation. But these are not normal times. The Covid 19 pandemic has caused the cancellation of the 2020 ARC and has led to a fall in our membership figures and a consequential loss of expected revenue. Our other areas of income are under significant strain and their future is uncertain. Subscription income is the core funding of the Union and must be protected if Equity is to continue to protect our members, and our industry.

This SRC therefore agrees that with effect from 1 January 2021 the minimum subscription rate of £136 will increase by 50p per month, bringing the yearly rate to £142. The higher subscription rates will also increase, maintaining their current percentage differential from the minimum subscription rate from 1 January 2021. The upper income threshold of the minimum rate of full membership to rise to £24,900, and the thresholds of higher subscriptions to rise to maintain the current differentials. The 50% reduction in rates for Long Service members will continue to apply, as will the reduction for those paying their subscription by Direct Debit.

The recommendation was proposed by Ian Barritt, seconded by Mary Lane, and **AGREED** unanimously.

Points made in discussion:

- A Councillor said that she supported this, but asked whether a 50p/month rise would cause any administrative difficulties. *Reply – the General Secretary said no, it would not, but that some of the decisions we would come back to in December would create some administrative challenges. This was a point worth noting, as it was the case that when he had looked at various creative, technical changes we could make, it*

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turned out that the technological and staffing costs of implementing them would in fact outweigh the income raised.

3.6.4.2 **Benevolent Fund proposals**

Bryn Evans, Honorary Treasurer, referred to paper 6d(iii). He said that we were reaching the time when we would have exhausted the monies in the Benevolent Fund. We had taken the decision to switch to subscriptions grants only, and to cease welfare grants, once the monies were reduced to £50,000. This currently meant that we could probably continue with welfare grants until the end of October.

The recommendation was supported unanimously by the FSWP and the Officers.

Recommendation:

It is likely that by the end of October Equity will have exhausted the union's ability to accede to welfare applications from members. In March 2020 the Council allocated £1 million of its resources to the Ben Fund. In addition we have received donations of over £272,000. Given how important subscription income is to the future of the union, the OSMT decided that we should draw back from awarding welfare grants once we had only around £50,000 left available to the Ben Fund, devoting this residue to assisting members with subscription grants.

The Council is therefore asked to approve the following statement:

"Thank you for your application. Unfortunately the Equity Benevolent Fund is now closed to new applications. In order to support members during the coronavirus pandemic, Equity placed £1 million into the Benevolent Fund, and members raised more than £250,000 in additional donations. The vast majority of this money has now been distributed to members in need.

Equity is still able to assist members who are unable to pay their subscription. If you are an Equity member in benefit and would like to apply for help with your subs, please email subs-help@equity.org.uk.

If approved by Council, in due course this notice will be published on the website and communicated to anyone who seeks a welfare grant.

We will also provide the link to further sources of help on our website: <https://www.equity.org.uk/support#further-support>

The recommendation was **proposed** by Mary Lane, **seconded** by Jean Rogers, and **AGREED** unanimously.

Bryn Evans, Honorary Treasurer, referred to paper 6d(ii).

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Recommendations:

That the Officers and Financial Stability Working Party recommend to Council the following:

- That Council suspends the requirement to have £200,000 in the Benevolent Fund for the calendar year 2021, mindful of having maintained over 6 times the amount in the course of 2020. This to be reviewed in June and December 2021.
- That Council ends the contribution of join/rejoin fees to the Benevolent Fund.
- That the Benevolent Fund total at the 31st December 2020 is treated as unrestricted, to be used for welfare and subscription grants
- That Council establishes a new 'Subscription Solidarity' drive to encourage members to donate to the Benevolent Fund for subscription grants for members in hardship during the ongoing uncertainty in 2021. As part of this explicit effort to encourage members to sponsor subscriptions for struggling members, all Benevolent Fund contributions in 2021 to be put exclusively toward subscription grants, unless the donor states otherwise. That this be reviewed at Council in March, and three monthly intervals thereafter if maintained.

The recommendations were **proposed** by Paul Valentine, **seconded** by Melanie La Barrie, and **AGREED** nem con, with one abstention.

3.7 SRC

Stephen Spence said that the options were either to have the SRC in the format presented, or not at all. We were receiving all sorts of additional requests which were simply not possible to achieve.

He said that we were not doing what the TUC had done, in moving and agreeing to all motions without debate, or what FIA had done, in cancelling their conference entirely until at least 2021. He and the General Secretary had sat down and selected not just six motions, but six headings, with approximately 10 motions clustered under those headings.

As this was an SRC and not an ARC, every piece of conference business would in fact be Council's business, the agenda would be Council's agenda, and the motions would be Council's motions – this was despite the fact that the motions came from various branches and committees from across the union.

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It had been decided to propose a full day meeting, despite our reservations as to the practical implications of this.

Christine Payne had asked to be removed as a speaker, though she would be in attendance as an Honorary Life Member.

John Carnegie had been invited to manage the timings.

The agenda and timetable were attached to the paper which went to Council, and would be sent to Branches and Committees immediately following this item, providing they were approved by Council.

Recommendation:

Council confirms the decision to hold a virtual SRC on Zoom on Monday 30th November 2020, from 10.30am – 4.00pm.

Council confirms the agenda of the SRC as motions (with the amendment as proposed by Kelly Burke below) selected on the six headings of Subscriptions, COVID, BBC, Brexit, Equalities and Performance for All. The motions to be debated are from the Council and the 2020 Provisional ARC agenda. In addition the agenda will include speeches from the President, the General Secretary and the Senior Deputy for the General Secretary.

All remaining motions submitted for the cancelled 2020 ARC will be remitted to a future meeting of Council for consideration.

Council confirms the attached timetable for the SRC.

Council will manage the agenda and timetable of the SRC through the General Secretary delegating to the Senior Deputy for the General Secretary and other appropriate Equity officials and activists.

Branches and Committees should begin the process of electing representatives in line with the adopted revised timetable.

The recommendation was **proposed** by Sally Treble, **seconded** by Dan Ayling, and **AGREED** unanimously.

Points made in discussion:

- A Councillor suggested inserting the timings into the recommendation. *Reply – Stephen Spence said we could do this, and suggested 10.30am – 4:00pm. The Officers supported this as an amendment to the recommendation.*
- Ian Barritt, speaking as a member of the SOC, said that he was happy to assist with timings. He also suggested that the General Secretary have the opportunity to speak to the SRC before the motion on subscriptions.

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- Kelly Burke, speaking as Chair of the Women’s Committee, proposed an amendment to Motion 2, paragraph 3: “As a campaigning trade union we will work together to use our resources, energy and support to build a common vision of what fairer artistic workplaces should look like AND TO CONTINUE TO protect, defend and improve the world of work, and expand access to quality terms and conditions.” and an amendment to paragraph 4: “Our bedrock for a post-COVID world is the 10 essentials for work after lockdown as outlined in the statement for Diversity and Inclusive Recovery.”
 - The General Secretary said that we hoped to be able to invite videos from Branches and Committees explaining the context and arguments behind the motions which had not made it to the SRC (to be dealt with by the Council on a separate date).
 - Stephen Spence said that under current Council policy, Branch AGMs could go ahead on Zoom, under the provisions set out in our Guidelines on online meetings. A notice would go out to branches shortly to clarify this.
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3.8 EQUALITY

3.8.1 Radical Statement of Intent on Anti-Racism

The General Secretary said that the statement had been published, and had formed the heart of an interview he had given to the Guardian last month. He thanked Councillors for their help in drafting it, and for their messages of support.

3.8.2 Equality Monitoring of Councillors

The General Secretary said that he had circulated the document again with a request for any changes from Councillors. He had received three requests for additions on mental health/neurodiversity, transgender, and class. It was also asked that heterosexual not be first on the list of sexuality, nor male on the list of gender. He had made those changes, and now asked Council to support.

The equality monitoring form was **proposed** by Paul Valentine, **seconded** by Dawn Hope, and **ENDORSED** nem con, with one abstention.

3.8.3 Equality Structure Update

Louise McMullan said that it was important to note that this paper was being brought to Paul’s first meeting as General Secretary, as it was a priority for him and a core part of his agenda. It was important progress that we now had equality as a standing item on the Council agenda.

Ian Manborde said that this was an important moment to be reviewing our equalities work, given the current crisis and where we were as a country. The union benefitted enormously from the experience, expertise, knowledge and

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dedication of the members working within our current equalities structure. We really valued what we had at the moment, but it was still important to step back and look at how the work could be improved.

He noted that there were a few recurring issues which did not have an obvious home within our current structure. For example, issues relating to carers often fell into the work of the Women's Committee, but these issues were of course relevant to all workers. Furthermore, the issue of class had no obvious home, and so had sometimes lacked focus.

In the union's equalities work as a whole, we lacked a real way of measuring the impact of our work on the day to day lives of working members. We were also lacking in education for activists, committee members, chairs, etc., on what we were fighting, and how to campaign on that basis.

There were not currently any equalities requirements or targets relating to the composition of the structures of the union itself. This had to be a priority – the union should reflect the values we want to see across the industry as a whole.

At the first equalities convention, the first day would focus on reimagining our structures, looking at three key issues:

- Organisation – including looking at how our equalities work engages with members outside of London and the Southeast of England;
- Activism – including looking at developing our equalities agenda through campaigns, engaging a broader group of members in supporting our demands;
- Measuring impact – developing quantitative and qualitative measures for the work that we do.

These sessions would be facilitated by colleagues from across the union movement, and there would also be sessions with invited speakers.

On the second day of the convention, ideas for a new structure would be presented, based on the reimagining of the first day.

Points made in discussion:

- A Councillor asked if we could consider training for activists on equalities issues.
- Bryn Evans, Honorary Treasurer, said that whilst it was important that we consult with branches and committees, it was crucial that we come up with a unified policy at the end of the process, which could be rolled out across the whole union.
- A Councillor said that it was important that this work involve and connect with all members, across the whole country.
- A Councillor said that equalities had once been a standing item on all branch meeting agendas, but that it had fallen away over time. It was great that it was returning as a focus.

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3.8.4 TUC Equality Conferences 2021

Ian Manborde said that we had been given a very short deadline for selecting nominees to the TUC Equality Conferences 2021, and that this was the reason for the recommendation.

Recommendation:

It is unlikely that Equity's equality committees will be able to meet and decide on its preferred nominees in advance of the October meeting of Council. For this year only Council is asked to devolve authority for agreeing to Equity nominees for TUC equality committees to the Officers.

The recommendation was **proposed** by Maggie McCarthy, **seconded** by Alan McKee, and **AGREED** unanimously.

Points made in discussion:

- A Councillor said that he supported this provision this year, and that we should be doing this every year. We should be trusting the members of our equalities committees to make these decisions without requiring ratification from Council.
- Kelly Burke, speaking as Chair of the Women's Committee, asked whether the decision could be devolved to the equalities committees themselves, rather than the Officers. *Reply – the General Secretary said that he was not sure this would be possible procedurally, but that he would commit to taking the recommendations of the equalities committees forward. He said that he would consult with Melanie La Barrie, Maureen Hibbert, Dawn Hope and Emmanuel Kojo on the nominee to the TUC Race Relations Committee.*

3.9 TRUSTEE

The General Secretary said that the Officers and Secretariat had put together a shortlist of members to be approached to be our next Trustee. This list should be handled sensitively and was confidential to the Council, because nobody on this list knew that they were on this list. The Officers had felt strongly that they wanted to include the Council in the process of deciding on who should be approached as our new Trustee, and this was the proposed method of doing that.

The new trustee form was **proposed** by David John, **seconded** by Mary Lane, and **AGREED** unanimously.

Points made in discussion:

- A Councillor said that it was perhaps not a good idea to select an employer as our new Trustee. *Reply – Bryn Evans, Honorary*

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Treasurer, noted that there was no formal restriction on this – the only requirement was that they were a member in good standing.

3.10 TUC Congress

Stephen Spence said that the TUC Congress had taken place at the start of September. The first day had involved speeches from representatives including Keir Starmer, Leader of the Labour Party, and the second day had involved voting on a series of motions with no time for debate.

We had chance to speak about our Four Pillars Plan, and Christine Payne had been awarded the Gold Badge for her long service as a General Council and Executive Council member.

Points made in discussion:

- A Councillor noted that in the motion on Palestine, the Congress had used the word “apartheid” for the first time. Whilst he had no objection to this himself, he noted that some of our members would object. *Reply – Stephen Spence said that Unite had written that particular motion, in solidarity with the broader campaign for Palestinian rights, and in opposition to the expansion of Israeli settlements. The clarification statement was to make it clear that as “apartheid” was a legal term, it was not for the TUC to make a determination, but for the UN. He added that our policy, as Equity, was to work with our progressive sister union in Israel, through FIA, and to support arts groups in Palestine as well.*
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3.11 LEGAL CASES

John Knowles v Verity Rae Martin Ltd

Paul Enever v Ratho Park Golf Club

Sean Collins v Barrow and Thompkins Connexions Ltd

Elizabeth Strange v Hearts and Minds Edinburgh

Kerry Charlton Senior v New Community Ventures Ltd

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Hayley Davis v Green Rock Media Ltd

The Legal Cases were **NOTED**.

3.12 MEMBERSHIP

3.12.1 Approval of New Members

The new members were **proposed** by David John, **seconded** by Dan Ayling, and **AGREED** unanimously.

3.12.2 Current Membership Position

Matt Hood referred to the membership statistics he had circulated. He said that the change in student members was due to many student members signing up in August this year instead of September. This had now balanced out.

He also observed that we had a large increase in deceased Life Members – this was due to the membership team having caught up with a backlog which had accumulated during the lockdown.

The current membership position was **NOTED**.

3.13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

3.13.1 Branches

Ian Barritt implored Councillors to get involved with their local branches. He said that reporting back from Council, whether it was well received or not, was always a positive thing. He suggested all Councillors resolve to attend at least one branch meeting a year.

3.13.2 Donations

Rhubarb the Clown asked whether we had investigated donations to the Benevolent Fund by text. Matt Hood said that this function existed already, though he noted that this was the most expensive of all the donation methods.

The Council Meeting concluded at 4:00 p.m.