



## **EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES AND RECORD OF THE**

### **SPECIAL MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL HELD VIA ZOOM**

**29 JANUARY 2021**

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#### **PRESENT:**

#### **EC MEMBERS:**

Sis.S. Abachor, Bro.D. Agbley, Bro.J. Allam, Bro.R. Allday, Bro.N. Atkinson, Sis.D. Bell, Bro.C. Bowen, Bro.G. Buchan, Bro.C. Cadman, Sis.M. Callaghan, Bro.M. Casey, Bro.E. Cassidy, Sis.L. Colquhoun, Bro.J. Cooper, Bro.M. Darlington, Sis.P. Davis, Bro.T. Davison, Sis.J. Douglas, Bro.K. Drury, Bro.A. Dyer, Bro.N. Gibson, Bro.J. Gill, Sis.W. Gilligan, Bro.J. Goddard, Bro.M. Gould, Bro.A. Green, Sis.R. Hayes, Bro.S. Hibbert, Bro.Z. Jones, Sis.T. Lanigan, Sis.L. Mansell, Bro.J. Mason, Sis.S. Matthews, is.H. McFarlane, Bro.T. Mitchell, Sis.T. Moloney, Bro.F. Morris, Bro.T. Murphy, Brp.K. Owens, Bro.T. Pearson, Bro.H. Percival, Bro.S. Rosenthal, Bro.D. Rothwell, Sis.M. Ryan, Bro.T. Seaman, Sis.J. Shepherd, Sis.M. Smith, Sis.K. Smith, Bro.K. Smith, Sis.M. Sorice, Sis.J. Stewart, Bro.N. Stott, Sis.F. Tatem, Sis.J. Taylor, Bro.S. Thompson, Bro.D. Williams, Bro.P. Wiseman, Bro.C. Young.

#### **EX OFFICIO:**

Bro. L McCluskey (General Secretary)  
Bro. A Murray (Chief of Staff)  
Bro. H Beckett (Assistant General Secretary)  
Bro. T Burke (Assistant General Secretary)  
Sis. I Dykes (Head of Constitutional Administration)  
Sis. S Graham (Executive Officer)  
Sis. D Holland (Assistant General Secretary)  
Sis.A. Jackson (Director of Executive Policy)  
Bro. S Turner (Assistant General Secretary)  
Bro. A Weir (Assistant Chief of Staff)  
Bro. C Duo (Observer, Gibraltar)

**In the Chair: Bro.T. Woodhouse.**

**Minute 153**                      **Apologies and Leave of Absence.**

**EC Members:**

Bro.S. Thompson gave prior notice that due to work commitments he would be offline from 14.00hrs.

Bro.M. Gould joined the meeting later.

Bro.N. Wareing was not present.

**Ex Officio:**

Sis.G. Cartmail

**Minute 154**                      **Chairs Welcome and Opening.**

The Chair welcomed the Council and welcomed Sis.T. Moloney back onto the Executive Council following the recent by-election.

The Chair placed on record his gratitude to all Executive Council members for attending this special meeting and explained that, although the Council had been advised that a full report on the Birmingham office and conference centre would be given at the March 2021 Executive Council meeting, recent malicious press articles had made it necessary to convene before then.

**Minute 155**                      **General Secretary's Report**

The General Secretary reported to the Council on the background to the union's property development in Birmingham and the costs associated with it. He deplored recent malicious and inaccurate press reporting as being designed to smear the union. He advised the Council that the late Bro. Ed Sabisky, Executive Director, Finance, Property & Pensions would never have allowed anything other than the highest standards of propriety in the union's commercial dealings, and that he was in charge of property projects, including tendering and oversight.

The General Secretary also told the Council that the union should not apologise for using only union labour, directly-employed and on proper rates of pay, on its construction projects, even if that led to considerable additional costs in some cases. Unite refuses to use construction companies that have been involved in blacklisting or who are Conservative party donors.

The General Secretary told the Council that the Birmingham development was something to be proud of, and would allow Unite to provide a first class service to its members at the same time as serving as a productive investment for years to come. It was a legacy to the work of Bro Sabisky above all.

He advised that documentation relating to the reports would be circulated to Council members within the next week.

**Minute 156**

**Report of Howard Beckett, Assistant General Secretary**

AGS Howard Beckett presented a detailed report on the Birmingham office, conference centre and hotel to the Council, covering detailed costings, explanations for over-runs in some areas and highlighting the great underlying strength of Unite's finances relative to all other unions in Britain. He gave further details of the costs associated with the implementation of the Unite Protocol for construction projects. This factor in itself limited the number of contractors able to bid for the work. Other factors included the extension of the size of the hotel, its upgrading in quality and the need for additional measures in the light of the dreadful Grenfell tragedy of 2017.

Bro Beckett also advised the Council that the Birmingham project has been valued, as it is, at the cost of the construction, making it a sound investment for the union.

His report was accompanied by a video presentation of the whole development, showing the full extent and quality of the project.

Questions were taken from Council members relating to both reports and responded to, and Council members expressed their opinions on the media attacks on the union. They welcomed the explanations given, received further clarification on some points, and underlined the need for the union to stay united in the face of unjustified attacks. Many Council members paid tribute to the work and character of the late Bro Sabisky.

**Minute 159**

**Conclusion**

At the conclusion of the debate, The Chair asked the Council to vote on the report given at this meeting.

**The report was unanimously endorsed.**

The Chair thanked the Executive Council for their time and participation and asked them to stay safe and well.

**The meeting thereupon closed.**