

LYL Chair's Report from Young Labour National Committee

26th January 2009

This was my first meeting of the Young Labour National Committee (YLNC) since becoming Chair of LYL. As Chair, I represent young members in London on this committee.

Report from Conference

Committee members were broadly pleased with Young Labour participation in Annual Conference. Sarah Mulholland (Labour Students) suggested that in future more campaign training should take place at conference, a view shared by many on the committee.

Sam Tarry (Trade Unions) said that more should be done to encourage CLPs to send young members to conference as delegates. Steph Peacock (NEC Youth Rep) informed us that the NEC have approved a rule change which will allow CLPs with more than 30 young members (members under the age of 27) to send an extra youth delegate to Annual Conference. This action was welcomed by all members of the Committee.

National Young Labour elections

Elections will take place this year for positions on the YLNC. This is the first time that most of these positions will be elected by young members.

Kiran Mahil (National Women & Equalities Officer) explained the election process to the committee.

Each region will now directly elect its Regional Rep to the YLNC through a One Member One Vote (OMOV) ballot. This will mean that myself and the other Regional Reps will need to stand for re-election to the committee in our respective regions.

There will be a National Youth Day on 18th April in Gillingham at which all the other positions shall be elected. Those positions will be:

- NEC Youth Rep (elected by an electoral college of one third CLPs/Young Labour, one third Labour Students and one third Affiliates)
- Young Labour Chair (elected by **only** young Labour/CLP delegates at the National Youth Day)
- Four minorities positions (LGBT, disabilities, women and BME) elected by self-defining caucuses of delegates at the conference.

I pointed out some anomalies in the process for electing the NEC Youth Rep. First of all, the requirement that the candidate be under 23 on the day of the election (when Young Labour itself has a maximum age of 27). Secondly, the electoral college is extremely skewed towards Labour Students in that they receive a third of the vote despite being a comparatively tiny affiliate. I pointed out that at Annual Conference the electoral college is 50% CLPs and 50% Affiliates (including Labour Students). Thomas Gardiner (Trade Unions) supported this point and pointed out that unions representing a much larger number of young people than Labour Students were getting a proportionally smaller vote.

Labour Students representatives strongly disagreed with us on this point.

Steph Peacock explained that the NEC sets the NEC Youth Rep maximum age at 23 so that the position is not dominated by older members. My own opinion is that if the organisation itself has a maximum age of 27 then members should be allowed to stand for official positions up until that age.

National Youth Day

It was suggested that we organise some campaigning in Gillingham during the National Youth Day (NYD) as it is a marginal seat.

We were asked for suggestions for speakers at the event. I suggested Jon Cruddas, Ed Miliband or Glenys Kinnock. Suggestions from other committee members included Liam Byrne and James Purnell. Sam Tarry suggested that speakers facilitate discussions in a similar way to the format used at the recent Progressive London Conference. This would allow more interaction and discussion between speakers and members.

Sam Tarry also suggested inviting the President of ECOSY (European Young Socialists) to the NYD because of the upcoming European Elections. Several committee members including Richard Angell (Trade Unions, YL Chair) were strongly against this idea.

Regional Reports

Drew Dagens (Yorkshire and Humber) reported a large amount of activity around the Go Fourth campaign, as well as plenty of campaigning. He expressed concern that it was difficult to get membership lists out of the Regional Labour Party.

I reported on LYL activity in London, including campaigns in three by-elections, the social with Jon Cruddas scheduled for the 3rd February, the event for aspiring young Labour candidates and the forthcoming series of Policy Forums.

I also informed the YLNC that LYL now advertises the £1 membership rate on Facebook.

Union Reports

Daniel Carden (Trade Unions) and Richard Angell attended the meeting about the merging of the T&G/Amicus youth sections.

Sam Tarry reported that the GMB held a recent event for its young members, which was a great success.

Labour Students Report

Sarah Mulholland reported that Labour Students activity was currently focussed on their upcoming conference.

NEC Report

Steph Peacock reported on the NEC away day.

This report is a personal account and should not be regarded as an official record of the meeting. Any questions or comments should be emailed to chair@londonyounglabour.org.uk