

Regional Political Committee Annual Report 2019

The General Election.

The political landscape has changed yet again since the result of the General Election, with the Tories now embolden and planning the next assault on the sectors of the population that would never vote Tory, along with the communities, towns and cities where we represent members.

We need to thank all those hardened folk who went out in the rain, wind and then more rain to get the Party message cross on the doorstep. It is distressing to see the hard work put into Constituencies by affiliated organisations like the trade unions; only to see that local Labour Group Leaders along with Leaders of Councils and Executive Members of Council, to not turn out at all.

This loss of impetus has to be addressed as we need to be aware of where our failings were; where we must improve over the next few years and to what style of politics do we aspire to?

Many times I heard that the Labour leadership on Brexit was so shambolic or was never understood in full, to the extent that hardened labour voters moved their allegiance. This will need to be tightened up for next time.

We also need to have a Leader who has a more focussed support group. For me, just stating that people do not want to hear the messages because they were so confused, allowed many voters to simply vote Tory.

The focus groupings show that the labour Party hit a high watermark with the under 35s; hit a good ballot return for the under 50s, but did not achieve any notable successes for the under 65s, irrespective of the increased volumes voting Labour, we will need, at the next General Election, a swing of 14.25% to generate a Labour majority of 1 seat in the House of Commons.

A headlong retreat into a Blairite or Trump style presidential niche grouping of politics will serve the trade unions less into the future.

Having said that, we must also become a broad church and very tolerant of political parties to attract the voter numbers for a Labour Government. How we get to that point will become more evident in the next few months.

For the CWU branches, I think that we can insist that some format of Hustings takes place for people who have a vote on the next Labour Party leadership contest to make the best informed view.

In the meantime, we have to be proud of the fact that the labour Party is Her Majesty's Opposition party in the House of Commons. We have not gone away. The Parliamentary democracy which we live in ensures that the Leader of the Opposition can hold BoJo and his cronies to account on all of their policies.

Work for 2020 onwards.

We still have many members who are Councillors in their own right and we can measure or increase the social value of our Councillors networking by trying to understand what is available in terms of improving the immediate local environment where our members live.

The Public Works Loan Board can ensure that fully costed and necessary infrastructure building can take place. This will need progressive thinking Local Authorities to mandate their Local Government officials to get cracking on certain civic improvements.

Government Circular 106 has all the details;

<https://www.dmo.gov.uk/responsibilities/local-authority-lending-pwlb/lending-arrangements/>

There also has to be some awareness amongst trade union ranks that our members voted for the full spread of political parties in the December General Election.

North West Labour Unions, (formerly TULO).

We have seen a lot of activity for Tulo recently through 2019, due to the impact of the national political debate. What has come to light is the fact that the TUC and Tulo nationally are adamant that the report by the Special Rapporteur for the UNICEF on Universal Benefits, some of which are in work benefits, are still not fit for purpose.

Listed below, again, the evidence of the problems which Universal Benefits deliver;

The key points he observed about Universal Credit were

1. The harsh and punitive nature of the UK social security system
2. That cuts to social security are a product of political choice not Financial necessity
3. The level of poverty is unacceptably high and it is set to keep on rising
4. The way that Universal Credit works (or doesn't work) embodies austerity
5. Cuts to public services more generally compound the impact of social security cuts
6. The government is in denial about the impact of social security cuts.

Moving into 2020, delegates to the NW Labour Unions Committee will still hold all elected Councillors, MPs and MEPs to account in terms of the Rules stating that all prospective and sitting candidates from the Labour Party must be a trade union member.

As reported above, this will be coupled with certain Labour Leaders not being available during a General Election. I will be consulting with the political committee to make this a requirement for CWU endorsing any new or existing Labour Leader in any future election scenario.

Metro Mayor Engagement.

Following the Regional Labour Party documentation sent to Carl and myself about nominations for the Metro Mayor positions, it was agreed that we support Andy Burnham for Greater Manchester and Steve Rotherham for Greater Merseyside.

We are in a very good position, as the CWU, to engage the Metro Mayors on many issues and we had successes on the Employment models for each Metro Region.

If the current Tory government are to be believed, there could well be more not less devolved government of the regions. This will mean that our influence can come to bear on policies such as secure and meaningful standards of employment across the Metro Regions.

What also appears to be on the horizon is social reinvestment opportunities could occur as a result of the above. So it is vital that regular effective contact with the Metro Mayors is maintained.