

## LI GC Saturday 18th July 2026 minutes

**Attendees:** Anne Kubiak (CENE), Boyd Steven (Vice-chair), Graham Ward (Secretary), Frankie Ashton (Policy & Campaigns), Sue Blackwell (Delegate, Netherlands), Valerie Swales (Delegate, Southern France), Balen Najmaldin (Communications), David Bowskill, Wojciech Kowalewski (Delegate CENE), Frank Little (Delegate, Netherlands branch), Becky Slack (Women's officer), Steve Holdup (Delegate, Southern Europe), Tim Putnam (Delegate, Southern France), Hector Muller (Young Labour officer), Valerie Swales (Delegate, Southern France), Doreen Henning, Richard Brinton (Delegate, Southern France), Lakshmi Jonker (BAME Officer)

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

- Apologies were minuted.

### 2. Apologies

Karen Henderson (Membership); Anthony Fuller (Americas Regional Officer)

### 3. Summary of updates to action items

(Closed action items will be archived after these minutes are approved.)

|      | Action                                                                                                                      | Who       | Status                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 05.2 | Continue work on branch status (Africa/Asia Pacific/Costa Blanca) and consider merging inactive branches where appropriate. | Secretary | 18 Jul: Costa Blanca–Southern Europe merger substantially complete; outstanding step is transferring the branch bank account to CLP. Monthly branch meetings to resume.<br>21 June: Merger agreed; EC to execute. |
| 07.1 | Draft and circulate the resolution of thanks to Alan Aitkenhead approved by the GC.                                         | EC        | 18 Jul: GC approved sending a resolution of thanks (14 in favour); EC to draft text.                                                                                                                              |

### 4. Summary of Votes and Motions

| Item |                                                                                                    | For | Abstain | Against | Decision |
|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|---------|---------|----------|
| 5    | Jun minutes                                                                                        | 13  |         |         | Passed   |
| 6.1  | Motion of thanks to Alan Aitkenhead                                                                | 14  | 0       | 0       | Passed   |
| 8.1a | Amendment to Palestine motion (restrict the import-ban clause to "Israeli settlements" rather than | 5   | 3       | 4       | Passed   |

|     |                                                                                                              |    |   |   |          |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|---|----------|
|     | settlements “in the occupied territories”)                                                                   |    |   |   |          |
| 8.1 | Palestine motion (as amended)                                                                                | 11 | 1 | 3 | Passed   |
| 8.2 | Building on National Insurance (Southern France, Isle of Man, Ireland)                                       | 2  | 4 | 9 | Rejected |
| 8.3 | Jury trials (Netherlands)                                                                                    | 13 | 0 | 0 | Passed   |
| 8.4 | Potentially discriminatory wording in Labour Party forms – Interpretation of Equality Act 2010 (Netherlands) | 9  | 3 | 2 | Passed   |
| 8.5 | MP misuse of by-elections (CENE)                                                                             | 11 | 1 | 3 | Passed   |

## 5. Minutes of Previous GC, Matters Arising and Action Items

The draft minutes of the General Committee meeting of 21 June 2026 were presented. No comments or corrections were raised and the minutes were approved.

**Branch status:** The Secretary reported that the Costa Blanca–Southern Europe merger is substantially complete; the remaining step is transferring the branch bank account to CLP so that funds can be held on the merged branch’s behalf. Monthly branch meetings are expected to resume once this is done.

**Winter Fuel Payment:** Sue Blackwell reported having written to MEPs following the last GC, including an Irish Labour MEP and an SPD MEP. A reply was received from the European Commission taking a different view; members indicated they are not fully satisfied and will continue to monitor the matter, including in light of ongoing discussions about implementation of the Withdrawal Agreement.

## 6. Motion of thanks to Alan Aitkenhead

The GC was asked to approve a formal resolution of thanks to Alan Aitkenhead, recognising his work on the LI Executive Committee and the additional tasks he took on beyond his role over recent years. The EC proposed that the GC approve sending a resolution of thanks in principle, with the text to be drafted afterwards and the thanks minuted at this meeting.

Vote: Carried (14 in favour, no abstentions, none against).

## 7. Update on Conference motions and arrangements

The Secretary gave a brief update: delegate registration for conference is complete, and the team is finalising a few remaining points with conference services. Branches were asked to let the Secretary know of any members attending conference so they can be added to the delegates’ WhatsApp group and other arrangements.

The Secretary also outlined this year’s revised process for conference motions: motions may be proposed at any time by branches, LI campaigns, or LI sub-groups (e.g. Young LI, the Women’s group); final motion text must be submitted by 23.55 CEST on 20 July 2026; proposers have the

opportunity to promote their motions to voting members in an informal discussion session on 18 July (no vote and no amendments taken – this is separate from, and follows, this GC meeting); and the final motion text will then go to an STV vote of all members, with the winning motion forwarded to the Labour Party's Conference Arrangements Committee.

A member raised a concern that, because their branch's working group had not finalised its own conference motion in time, they had missed the opportunity to present and argue for it at this GC before the members' discussion session. It was clarified that, under this year's process, conference motions go directly from branches/campaign groups to the membership rather than via the GC, so presenting a motion at the GC is an optional opportunity rather than a requirement; the GC's own amendments to a motion (for LI's internal policy purposes) do not carry over to the separate conference-motion process, which starts afresh.

## **8. Proposed policy motions**

### **8.1 Palestine (Netherlands branch, co-sponsored by LI Belgium)**

Proposer: Becky Slack, Belgium Branch; Seconder: Sue Blackwell, Netherlands Branch

Debate: Becky Slack outlined Brussels Labour's ongoing work on Gaza, including a dedicated Gaza subgroup, participation in a march in Brussels, correspondence on a detained Palestinian political prisoner, and work with Medical Aid for Palestinians. She noted the ceasefire has not stopped bombing or killing, and that violence has expanded into the West Bank. The motion calls on the Labour Government to suspend the UK–Israel trade and partnership agreement, end arms sales to Israel, ban transit of military equipment and munitions to Israel, ban the import of goods and services from Israeli settlements, and support multilateral efforts toward a two-state solution, including the release or trial of those held without charge. Frank Little noted conference passed an arms-embargo motion in 2025 despite leadership opposition, though the resulting embargo remains partial. Steve Holdup said he supported the motion but questioned why LI does not table equivalent motions on other conflicts (e.g. Sudan, Congo, Xinjiang); Doreen responded that Britain's historical role in Palestine (the British Mandate) explains the particular focus, and that branches remain free to propose motions on other situations.

Amendment: Doreen proposed narrowing the import-ban clause so that it refers only to "Israeli settlements" rather than settlements "in the occupied territories", citing produce from occupied land being mislabelled as being of Israeli origin. Frank Little spoke against the amendment, arguing the mislabelling issue is a question of stricter labelling checks, not a reason to narrow the motion, and that widening pressure onto Israel itself would need its own separate motion.

Vote on amendment: Carried (5 in favour, 3 abstentions, 4 against)

Vote on motion as amended: Carried (11 in favour, 3 against, 1 abstention).

### **8.2 Building on National Insurance (Southern France, Isle of Man, Ireland)**

Proposer: Tim Putnam; Seconder: Valerie Swales.

Debate: Tim explained the motion originated from a member's concern (raised via Terry Moore) about extending National Insurance to help with private rental costs in retirement, and was broadened by the branch to cover ring-fencing NI contributions, extending NI benefits to social care, and applying NI to unearned as well as earned income above the state pension. Steve

Holdup questioned whether NI is in practice a genuinely ring-fenced fund. Richard and Sue Blackwell both felt the motion mixed together several distinct issues (housing, NI reform, pensions) and suggested it be split into separate, more focused motions. Doreen clarified that NI contributions sit in three largely ring-fenced national funds and are sometimes topped up from general taxation when in deficit. Tim clarified the motion does not oppose such top-ups, only the “viring” of NI funds to unrelated spending.

Vote: Not carried (2 in favour, 9 against, 3 abstentions) It was suggested the proposing branch rework the motion – potentially as separate motions on housing and on National Insurance – for a future meeting.

### **8.3 Jury trials (Netherlands)**

Proposer: Sue Blackwell; Seconder: Frank Little.

Debate: Sue set out the history of jury trial and jury equity/nullification in England, citing the Clive Ponting and Ploughshares cases, and raised concerns about the Courts and Tribunals Bill's proposals to remove jury trial for some offences, the Walney review's treatment of politically-motivated acquittals, and the sentencing and contempt proceedings arising from the Filton Palestine Action trial. Frank Little spoke in support, emphasising the importance of upholding the rule of law.

Vote: Carried (13 in favour, no abstentions, none against).

### **8.4 Potentially discriminatory wording in Labour Party forms – Interpretation of Equality Act 2010 (Netherlands)**

Proposer: Frank Little; Seconder: Sue Blackwell.

Debate: Frank Little and Sue Blackwell objected to the 2026 conference delegate registration form requiring a mandatory answer on “biological sex at birth”, with reference to police verification, arguing this discriminates against and discourages trans members from being delegates. Richard and Tim raised concerns that the motion's final paragraph went beyond criticising the mandatory question, and Tim indicated he could not support that part without amendment; Hector Muller asked for clarification that this was a general policy statement rather than a conference motion. Frank Little closed by linking the change to the Supreme Court's April 2025 ruling and arguing LI should press for the underlying law to be revisited. This discharges the action from the 21 June meeting for the Netherlands branch to bring forward a motion on this issue.

Vote: Carried (9 in favour, 2 against, 3 abstentions).

### **8.5 MP misuse of by-elections (CENE)**

Proposer: Wojciech Kowalewski (CENE branch); Seconder: Boyd Steven Vice-Chair).

Debate: The motion was raised in response to Nigel Farage resigning as an MP – while under investigation by the Committee on Standards – in order to trigger, and then stand in, the resulting Clacton by-election, at an estimated cost to the taxpayer of around £275,000. Boyd Steven noted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has the power to decline such a resignation and argued this power should be used in future to prevent MPs escaping investigation this way. Steve Holdup and Frank Little questioned aspects of the motion, including whether the real issue was the

Chancellor's own decision rather than the resignation process itself; Richard suggested it would be more logical to simply bar a resigning MP from standing in the resulting by-election. Tim Putnam and Boyd Steven closed in support, clarifying the motion is intended as forward guidance for future Chancellors rather than criticism of the current one.

Vote: Carried (11 in favour, 3 against, 1 abstention).

### **9. Questions on Officer Reports**

No questions were raised in the meeting; members were asked to email any questions on officer reports to the EC directly.

### **10. Finances and Budget**

The Treasurer was not able to give a detailed update but it was reported that a bank administration issue has now largely been resolved; a fuller finance report is expected by September.

### **11. AOB**

None raised.