

Minutes (SEC 12034-12069) of a meeting of the Bectu Sector Executive Committee held on Sunday 21 March 2021 at 10.30am via Zoom

Present: Andrea Gauld - Chair

Richard Avis, Christine Bond, Mike Dick, Andrew Evans, Keith Flett, Steve Grey, John Handley, Liz Hardwick, Glen Keane, Tom Machell, Carol Magor, Gary Painter, Nick Ray, Tracey Russell, Caroline Sansom, Alan Smith, Mark Steele, Angus Wheeler-Rowe, Chester Yang and Nicole Young

Philippa Childs – Head of Bectu
Spencer MacDonald – National Secretary
Noel McClean – National Secretary
John Ferrett – National Secretary
Diane Lockwood – PA to Head of Bectu

Observer: Philip O’Rawe (NEC)

Apologies: Darrell Briggs, Iain Dawson and Ian Stewart

PRESIDENTIAL AND SEC ELECTIONS 2021-2023

The Head of Bectu advised the SEC that the deadline for submission of nominations was 24 February 2021 and that there were currently elections being held in the A&E and RPD Divisions, as nominations exceeded seats. The ballot papers had been issued to branches and the results for the new SEC for the 2021-2023 term of office would be announced at Conference in May. She also advised that there were vacancies in the BBC, BT and LPD Divisions.

SEC member Christine Bond noted that the election was held by a branch vote. It was

(SEC 12034) AGREED to note the report

SEC DATES TO THE END OF 2022

Head of Bectu Philippa Childs presented DGS Letter 2678 which contained the draft dates for the SEC meetings to the end of 2022. She also advised that another SEC meeting would need to be arranged to discuss the SEC’s attitude to rule changes, propositions and speakers. The Committee agreed the next meeting would be held on Sunday 18 April 2021 at 10.30am, which should last for approximately an hour. It was

(SEC 12035) AGREED to endorse DGS Letter 2678 with the dates for the SEC meetings to the end of 2022, with the additional date of 18 April 2021

SECTOR STRUCTURES

The Head of Bectu advised the Committee that the National Executive Committee, at their recent meeting, had considered the proposal from the BT Division to leave the Bectu Sector and create a separate Digital and Telecommunications Sector (name to be agreed). The NEC had agreed in principal that the BT Division would leave the Sector in its entirety and that the employer-based branches of the Digital Division would join the new Sector. A discussion ensued about the positives and negatives of this proposal. It was

(SEC 12036) AGREED to note the report

AGENDA

Chair Andrea Gauld presented the agenda and it was

(SEC 12037) AGREED to adopt the agenda

MINUTES

The Chair tabled minutes SEC 12031-12033 of the meeting held on 8 February 2021.

SEC member Andrew Evans asked for motions and more detail of debates to be included in future minutes and proposed the following motion:

Motion 1

That the SEC believes that the minutes of their meetings should reflect the true events of what occurred and that accordingly:

- At their December, January and February meetings the budget was not passed.
- At their January meeting a number of members expressed their concerns, over the autonomy of the Sector and oversight of its finances, to the General Secretary and President of Prospect.
- At their January meeting it was agreed that all correspondence sent to the SEC would be placed on the agenda of their next meeting for discussion to be answered by the SEC.

The motion was seconded. The results were: For: 11 Against: 6 Abstained: 4
It was

(SEC 12038) AGREED that **Motion 1** was carried

It was also

(SEC 12039) AGREED to adopt minutes SEC 12031-12033 of the meeting held on 8 February 2021

STAFFING

The Head of Bectu updated the Committee on staffing and vacancies. She advised that the four organising officials' posts had been filled and that Paula Lamont had been promoted to Assistant Secretary of the LPD Division. She also reported that they were in the process of identifying support at Assistant Secretary level for the vacancy in the RPD Division. A discussion about divisional association and officials ensued and it was

(SEC 12040) **AGREED** to circulate an updated organisational chart with details of officials' areas of responsibility

MEMBERSHIP

2021 Recruitment, Retention and Training / Branch Analysis and Joiners and Leavers

Head of Bectu Philippa Childs presented SEC reports 6265 and 6267 which were the membership and joiners and leavers figures for January and February 2021 respectively. She advised that in 2020 there was a gain of approximately 2,500 but since July 2020 the Sector had been in a position of decline. She said that despite this she was optimistic that once the industry was able to get back to full capacity that there would be a reverse in trend and the Sector would be able to get back into membership growth. It was

(SEC 12041) **AGREED** to note the report

Digital Update

The Head of Bectu presented DGS Letter 2680 which contained an update on the digital projects including the Contact Relationship Management (CRM) project, which will provide one database for Bectu/Prospect users, and the new website.

SEC members raised concerns about the website and its search function, defective links and archive material. The Head of Bectu assured the Committee that these issues were being addressed and that key information would be restored on the website.

She advised that both the CRM should be up and running and the archive material should be on the website, by the end of this year. It was

(SEC 12042) **AGREED** to note the report

Honorary Membership

Head of Bectu Philippa Childs presented SEC reports 6273 and 6275 which contained recommendations for Honorary Membership for Colin Thomas, Andrea Gauld, Mike Scott and Sharon Rigby. It was

(SEC 12043) **AGREED** to recommend to Sector Conference that Colin Thomas, Andrea Gauld, Mike Scott and Sharon Rigby be awarded Honorary Membership at the 2021 BECTU Sector Conference

INDUSTRIAL REPORTS

Arts & Entertainment Division

NS Noel McClean reported that theatre employers appeared to have varying degrees of optimism as to when live performances may start operating again. He advised that there may well be a link between this and the ongoing lack of insurance. Bectu was still pressing the Government to back a sector insurance scheme.

He also advised that planning was taking place for a major theatre campaign designed to ensure that building back was based on more robust, more secure employment models. It was

(SEC 12044) **AGREED** to note the report

BBC Division

NS Noel McClean advised the Committee that there had been a major announcement from the BBC Director-General Tim Davie this week on “Across the UK”, the BBC’s strategy for investing more resources in the nations and regions of the UK. Whilst giving a cautious welcome to the strategy, Bectu had obvious concerns for London based members and would be working through the details to ensure the best possible outcome.

He advised that at the close of the process the BT Division had successfully filled the 3 lay official roles with 5 people, 4 on 2x job share basis. This may have implications for the NJC allocations but this would be worked through with the BBC Divisional Committee. It was

(SEC 12045) **AGREED** to note the report

BT Division

NS John Ferrett advised the Committee that the union had been engaged in negotiations over the past few months to gain improvements to the company's severance terms proposals which they issued at the end of November 2020. The revised proposals were now out to a ballot of members. The most important change to the company's original proposals had been securing a contractual entitlement to the enhanced redundancy terms under the new policy. The union was recommending acceptance of the revised proposals as the best that can be achieved by negotiation. The ballot closes on 29 March.

He reported that a pay claim has been submitted for 3%. This followed a pay freeze that was implemented last year by BT. The indications from the company were that there would be continued restraint on pay for the coming year.

He also advised that the union was keeping a close eye on the potential for industrial action to be taken by the CWU in BT. The CWU had announced they would now be holding an industrial action ballot but had not yet published a timetable. It was

(SEC 12046) AGREED to note the report

Digital Division

NS John Ferrett reported that for Telefonica O2 the union continued to await the outcome of the Competitions and Market review, under the auspices of the European Commission, into the proposed merger between Telefonica and Liberty Global/Virgin Media. If the merger went ahead it could have an impact on the union within O2 given the latter organisation's well known hostility to trade unions.

He also reported that Bectu had members in both Capita O2 and Tesco Mobile who would be impacted by the recent statement from the Capita CEO, John Davies, who had said that home working would become the norm for many, if not most, call centre staff. Allied to the statement from Vodafone that hybrid working would be adopted in the future, this would present considerable challenges for us in terms of organising and recruitment going forward. It was

(SEC 12047) AGREED to note the report

Independent Broadcasting Division

NS Noel McClean advised the Committee that all Independent Broadcasting's industrial work was now allocated and covered.

He also advised that a major restructuring consultation was taking place at Arqiva with significant numbers of proposed redundancies. Bectu was fully involved.

He reported that a meaningful dialogue with Al Jazeera on the 2021 pay claim was proving problematic, with an escalation was looking inevitable. It was

(SEC 12048) AGREED to note the report

London Production and Regional Production Divisions

NS Spencer MacDonald reported to the Committee that the Construction negotiations began last year and were now coming to a conclusion. Bectu had agreed a 2.5% increase, outstanding terms would be discussed in June and the streamers would be joining the agreement from September. The offer was now out for consultation.

Major motion picture talks had been restarted from when they came to a standstill in 2020. After a successful meeting with reps some suggested alterations had been submitted. These had been accepted by the employers. The revised agreement would come in from 5 April.

The TV drama agreement had been the cause of friction because Pact had been issuing guidance that weakens the interpretation of the terms and conditions. A successful and positive meeting of reps had been held and the union was now planning a strategy for bringing about change. Sparks pay claim for drama had been concluded. They will receive 5% for two years. The Sparks negotiations for films was proving more problematic, but the talks are continuing for an increase.

He also reported that a Prep and Wrap campaign had been launched and was now focused on four key branches. However, the union was seeking support from all branches to help underpin the campaign.

Bectu was also involved in a commercial diversity action plan. A small working party of employers and Bectu reps had been set up and were looking at how they could inspire employers to broaden their inclusion strategy. It was

(SEC 12049) AGREED to note the report

CAMPAIGNS AND LIVE EVENTS

BBC and Public Service

NS Noel McClean advised the Committee that recent developments had prompted thinking on expanding this campaign to include the wider issue of Public Service Broadcasting and impartial news output. It was

(SEC 12050) AGREED to note the report

Dignity at Work

The Head of Bectu had reported that the Dignity at Work campaign was being revitalised and refocused following the pandemic. It was

(SEC 12051) AGREED to note the report

Sector Survey – One Year On

Head of Bectu Philippa Childs reported on the One Year On survey of members carried out recently. She advised that an email with the results was sent out to all members the previous Friday confirming that approximately 4,000 members working in the film and TV industries, broadcasting, live events, cinemas, and cultural venues (including theatres) had responded. She reported on the results, which showed that 21% of members in the creative industries had been excluded from Government support as a result of the pandemic. She also spoke on the work that the union had been doing with ITV London to highlight the impact on Theatres and the letter that had gone to Government seeking further support for the creative industries. It was

(SEC 12052) AGREED to note the report

EU Visas and Touring

NS Noel McClean reported that a major lobbying campaign had been instigated to highlight the lack of specific clauses in the Trade and Cooperation Agreement to enable touring professionals to work across the EU. Bectu had been represented at an online rally ahead of the select committee debate, a round-table discussion with the Labour Party, the union had raised the issue directly with DCMS and been involved in a letter from UNI MEI to Ursula Von Der Leyen, President of the European Commission. It was

(SEC 12053) AGREED to note the report

FINANCE

Sector responsibilities and finance (DGS Letter 2676)

NEC and sector relationship and responsibilities (DGS Letter 2677)

Revised Sector Budget (DGS Letter 2679)

The Head of Bectu presented the three papers above. She advised that the Revised Sector Budget for 2021 now contained the correct cost allocations for 2020 but the budget for 2021 remained the same. She reported that this budget should be sufficient for the Sector's needs this year, however additional funding could be applied for if required.

The Committee then had an in-depth discussion about the Sector Budget and SEC member Andrew Evans proposed the following two motions:

Motion 2

That the Head of Bectu and the General Secretary of Prospect provide all documents drawn up by the accountants that relate to DGS 2676 to all the members of the SEC as members of the Union as to provide a true and fair view of the finances of the Union and the Bectu Sector and explain its transactions. Provided such documents disaggregate transactions such that no group of transactions exceeds £100,000 (only single transactions exceeding this figure) it will not be necessary to inspect all receipts and remittances.

The motion was seconded. The results were: For: 11 Against: 5 Abstained: 5
It was

(SEC 12054) AGREED that Motion 2 was carried

Motion 3

That the 2020 expenditure contained in DGS 2679 and 2021 budget bear no relation to the figures in DGS 2676 and the budget cannot be signed off until the information requested regarding the figures in DGS 2676 are provided.

The motion was seconded. The results were: For: 11 Against: 5 Abstained: 5
It was

(SEC 12055) AGREED that Motion 3 was carried

It was also

**(SEC 12056) AGREED that DGS 2676 Sector responsibilities and finance and
DGS 2679 Revised Sector Budget were not endorsed**

It was further

(SEC 12057) AGREED to note DGS 2677 National Executive Committee and sector relationship and responsibilities

2021 BECTU SECTOR CONFERENCE

The Head of Bectu advised the Committee that a presentation of providers had been held a couple of weeks ago and that two virtual conference systems would run in parallel; one to manage registration of delegates and voting and the other to operate the conference platform itself. She advised that a 'dress rehearsal' of the platform could be organised for users.

A discussion ensued about the validity and number of rejections to rule changes and propositions made by the Standing Orders Committee and the number of possible challenges that may be brought forward by branches at Conference. The Head of Bectu explained that the SOC were elected to organise conference business and it was not appropriate for the SEC to intervene in that. A motion to allow the rejections to be put back on the order paper was tabled, but this was not seconded or voted upon and a move to next business was made. It was

(SEC 12058) AGREED to note the reports

Conference Document 3

The Head of Bectu submitted Conference Document 3 which contained the rule changes and propositions submitted to the Standing Orders Committee together with the forms for amendments. The deadline for amendments was 7 April 2021. It was

(SEC 12059) AGREED to note the report

DIVISIONAL COMMITTEES

BT Division

The Chair presented SEC report 6266 which contained the minutes of the BT Divisional Committee meeting held on 20 January 2021. No items were drawn out for the attention of the SEC. It was

(SEC 12060) AGREED to endorse the report

Independent Broadcasting Division

The Chair presented SEC report 6274 which contained the minutes of the IB Divisional Committee meeting held on 10 November 2020. No items were drawn out for the attention of the SEC. It was

(SEC 12061) AGREED to endorse the report

London Production Division

The Chair presented SEC report 6269 which contained the minutes of the LPD Divisional Committee meeting held on 16 January 2021. No items were drawn out for the attention of the SEC. It was

(SEC 12062) AGREED to endorse the report

Regional Production Division

The Chair presented SEC report 6268 which contained the minutes of the RPD Divisional Committee meeting held on 13 February 2021. One item was drawn out for the attention of the SEC on staffing which had been dealt with earlier on the agenda. It was

(SEC 12063) AGREED to endorse the report

SPECIALIST COMMITTEES

Women's Equality Committee

The Chair tabled SEC reports 6271 and 6271a which contained the revised by-laws for the Women's Equality Committee in advance of the minutes of their AGM held on 27 February 2021. It was

(SEC 12064) AGREED to endorse the revised by-laws for the Women's Equality Committee

Training Committee

The Head of Bectu submitted SEC report 6272 which contained the minutes of the Training Committee meeting held on 25 February 2021. SEC member Mark Steele advised the meeting that the Training Committee had discussed the Alfie Squires Bursary and nominations that had been received. He advised that the Training Committee would be reviewing the criteria of the award at a future meeting. It was

(SEC 12065) AGREED to note the report

The SEC were advised that Keith Stokes would be leaving the Independent Broadcasting Division and joining the Regional Production Division. Keith had been a stalwart member of the division and it was agreed to thank him for his hard work and commitment over many years. It was

(SEC 12066) AGREED to note the report

POLITICAL AND INTERNATIONAL

Brexit

The Head of Bectu submitted SEC report 6270 which contained a report on Brexit from Research Officer Tony Lennon for the Committee's information. It was

(SEC 12067) AGREED to note the report

UNI Europa ICTS

The Head of Bectu advised the Committee that BT and Digital Divisions would deal with nominations for the UNI Europa ICTS Conference being held on 13-14 October in Birmingham. It was

(SEC 12068) AGREED to note the report

UNI Europa Conference 2021

The Head of Bectu reported that the UNI Europa Conference would be held on 27-29 April and the Women's Conference would take place on 26 April. Both would be held virtually. It was

(SEC 12069) AGREED to note the report

The meeting closed at 1.45pm