

Meeting to establish Green Party Women
Held at Autumn Conference, 7 September 2009
Chair : Natalie Bennett
Minutes: Cathryn Symons

Discussion:

It was noted that conference agreed yesterday that this meeting should be open to men, rather than women only as advertised. There were four men in the meeting, and about thirty women.

It was asked why men wanted to attend. Men responded that it was an inaugural meeting, so all could work out if they wanted to engage with the group. Fringe sessions were a place to be inclusive. All have stakes in womens issues.

The meeting agreed to let men stay.
At this point, two women left the meeting.

It was explained that the starting point for the group was to work out how to affiliate with NGOs and women's groups.

Discussion about the two groups – Women By Name and Green Party Women. Women by Name is to enable and support women, providing a safe, separate space. Green Party Women has a broader remit. Women By Name will remain a women-only space

The meeting agreed to found Green Party Women.

A women who needed to leave the meeting due to another engagement asked that her comment be noted. She felt that men should not be in Green Party Women, and should remain silent if they were.

The meeting proceeded to discuss the constitution clause by clause. (Please refer to a copy of the constitution to be attached to these minutes).

Clause 1 – **accepted**.

Clause 2.

Part 1 **accepted**.

Part 2 – insert the word 'relevant; between forward and policy. Wording to be added to the effect that the group should promote women-relevant policies within the GPEW, and promote GPEW policy to external women's groups.

Part 3 **accepted**.

Clause 3.

Part 1. Discussion about the definition of female This is accepted to include

anyone identifying as female (including male to female transsexuals).
Debate about whether men should be included as full members. Men said they wanted to be part of the group. Views were expressed that men wouldn't understand the issues. Comparison was made to disabled groups where able-bodied people are not allowed to be decision makers although they are welcome to contribute.

The meeting agreed that men would not be included as full members.

The meeting agreed that men would be included as associate members

Part 2 **The meeting agreed** that associate members will be allowed to attend meetings.

The meeting agreed to strike the words 'that are not declared women only'.

The meeting agreed that allowing attendance implied that associate members would be allowed to speak.

The wording of the last 2 lines of the clause should be amended to clarify that associate members will be members of the email list and will be encouraged to support actions.

Concern was raised about women who had left the meeting, or perhaps not attended because they were not comfortable in a shared space and so were not included.

Noted that 'gender and diversity coordinator' should read 'equality and diversity coordinator'.

Clause 4.

The meeting agreed to set the quorum for the AGM at 10 voting members

The meeting agreed unanimously to adopt the constitution as agreed.

Officers were agreed in the interim, to be properly elected at Spring Conference. Officers agreed are:

Chair – Natalie Bennett

Secretary – Cathryn Symons

Treasurer – Maria Iacovou

Membership Secretary – Nancy Burns

Other committee members – Liz Wakefield, Rebecca Findley, Justine Hall.