



UNISON Conference Bulletin

September 2017

Community Conference and Seminar 2018

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This bulletin contains the timetable and information for
2018 Community Service Group Conference and Seminar

Please note that both motions and delegations can only be submitted online.
There are no paper forms.

The Community Service Group Conference and Seminar will be held at the Southport Convention Centre, from 12noon on Friday 2 March until 12noon on Sunday 4 March 2018.

The motions-based conference will take place on the Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning. All delegates are also automatically invited to the annual seminar on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning.

Southport Theatre and Convention Centre
The Promenade
Southport PR9 0DZ

Tel: 01704 514770

Web: www.southporttheatreandconventioncentre.com/

Timetable

Deadline for Submission of Motions	12noon	Friday 10 November 2017
Publication of Preliminary Agenda		Friday 1 December 2017
Deadline for Submission of Delegates	5.00pm	Monday 18 December 2017
Deadline for Submission of Amendments	12noon	Friday 5 January 2018
Deadline for babysitting and crèche places	5.00pm	Friday 19 January 2018
Deadline for reasonable adjustment requests for access	5.00pm	Friday 19 January 2018
Publication of Final Agenda	-	Friday 2 February 2018
Deadline for Emergency Motions	5.00pm	Friday 23 February 2018
Deadline for Submitting Change of Delegates on the OCS	5.00pm	Monday 26 February 2018

Enclosed with this Conference Bulletin, and available for download on the conference webpage <https://www.unison.org.uk/events/2018-community-conference/> are:

Information on how to submit motions and delegations using UNISON's Online Conference System (OCS)

Which branch officers can use the OCS? Motions and delegations can be submitted at branch level by either the Branch Chair or Branch Secretary. The other will receive e-mail copies of the motion or delegation submission as soon as it is submitted. Branch employed staff will also be able to enter motions but will not have authority to submit them on behalf of a branch.

At regional level, the regional head of the service group will be authorised to submit the motion/delegation, with the chair of the regional committee receiving an instant e-mail copy. This process is replicated at national level for national bodies and their relevant chairs and secretaries.

Which members can use the OCS? When a member is registered as a delegate to a conference, they will receive an e-mail informing them of this as long as their e-mail address is listed on the RMS. They can then also access the OCS to upload their photograph, to make online requests for services such as reasonable adjustments and crèche places, which should be made by the deadline stated.

How will these people access the OCS? Users access the OCS via the UNISON website at www.unison.org.uk and clicking on 'My UNISON' - which is located at the top of the front page. Using your UNISON membership number and surname, register once and you will be issued with a password. For subsequent access, simply click on 'My UNISON' and then 'Sign-in now' and you will need your membership number and the password you were issued. Branch employed staff should call their regional contact.

What if the correct branch people have accessed 'My UNISON' but then cannot access the OCS? Key to accessing the OCS is ensuring that the data held on UNISON's membership system, the RMS, is correct. It records which members hold the key positions of Branch Secretary and Branch Chair. If this information is incorrect, or if it changes, the branch needs to ensure that the RMS records are updated immediately. Then the individual should call their regional contact.

What else needs to happen? It will help the system to function if these key branch people also have an e-mail address stored on their RMS records. Please contact your branch or regional RMS team urgently, to make this happen. Each delegate within a delegation should also have their date of birth stored on the RMS.

Delegates and Visitors to Conference: It is important that we collect e-mail addresses for those members wishing to participate in any way in the conference. The e-mail address can be any one that you have easy access to e.g. your personal e-mail, branch e-mail or that of a friend or relative.

If you already have an e-mail address and access to the UNISON website, the quickest way to update your details is to go to the UNISON website and click 'My UNISON' – you will need your UNISON membership number.

If you don't have an e-mail address or don't have access to the UNISON webpage, you can

contact UNISONdirect on 0800-0-857-857 and provide them with the details of your preferred e-mail address to update your UNISON Membership records – you will need your UNISON membership number.

Or, you can contact your local UNISON branch and provide them with the details of your preferred e-mail address to update your UNISON membership records – you will need your UNISON membership number.

Key contacts:

If you have a 'My UNISON' registration issue: UNISONdirect on 0800-0-857-857

If you have an OCS issue, please contact your relevant regional contact. Listed below are the Conference contacts for each region, who can also assist with online conference registration:

Region	Contact	Tel	E-mail
Eastern	Amanda Tickner	01245 608909	a.tickner@unison.co.uk
East Midlands	Colleen Forrest (Tues & Fri only)	0115 847 5468	c.forrest@unison.co.uk
	Katrina Grace (Mon & Tues only)	0115 847 5417	k.grace@unison.co.uk
Greater London	Shelley Davey Lorraine Tant Cally Thompson	0207 535 6648	glrconference@unison.co.uk
Northern	Allison Jackson	0191 245 0805	a.jackson2@unison.co.uk
Northern Ireland	Elizabeth Robinson	02890 270190	e.robinson@unison.co.uk
North West	Kim Scott	0161 661 6777	k.scott@unison.co.uk
	Gillian Gorman	0161 661 6743	g.gorman@unison.co.uk
Scotland	Rosaleen Rodgers	0141 342 2816	r.rodgers@unison.co.uk
	Jean Fraser	0141 342 2880	j.fraser@unison.co.uk
South East	Catherine Still	01634 285708	c.still@unison.co.uk
	Kieran Pearson	01483 406510	k.pearson@unison.co.uk
South West	Jenn Gollings (Mon – Thurs only)	01823 285336	j.gollings@unison.co.uk
Cymru/Wales	Rosa Pickavance	01792 483910	r.pickavance@unison.co.uk
West Midlands	Claire Kenny	0121 685 3174	c.kenny@unison.co.uk
Yorkshire & Humberside	Laraine Senior	0113 218 2333	l.senior@unison.co.uk
	Tracy Shearon	0113 218 2349	t.shearon@unison.co.uk

Disenfranchised Branches

Branches are reminded that under Rule D.1.3.3.1 you will be disenfranchised from sending delegates to attend National Delegate Conference and Service Group Conferences for the remainder of the financial year following the year to which the financial return applies, if you did not submit your annual financial returns (Rule G.10.1) to your UNISON regional office by no later than **15 March each year**.

National and Regional Representation

The following bodies are eligible to send two delegates (at least one of whom should be female) who shall be entitled to speak but not to vote:

- National Self-Organised Groups
- Regional Service Groups
- National Sector Committees
- Private Contractors National Forum
- National Young Members' Forum

Delegates must be members of branches in the Community Service Group.

Branch Representation

Branch representation levels are as defined by the Community Service Group. The requirements for ensuring proportionality and fair representation of branch delegations is in line with the NDC Scheme of Branch Representation which applies to all service groups.

- 1) All delegates to the Community Service Group Conference must be members of the Community Service Group.
- 2) Branches shall be entitled to one delegate for the first 250 Community service group members within the branch, a second delegate for the next 250 members or part thereof, and one further delegate per subsequent 500 Community service group members or part thereof (based on branch membership at 30 September of the year before the conference).
- 3) If a branch has only one delegate, that delegate may be female or male, but these branches must consider the gender split of their Community service group membership, and in particular, branches whose Community service group membership is more than 50% female should strive to ensure that their one delegate is a woman. The gender make up of the delegation must be based on the gender make up of the Community service group membership within the branch.
- 4) Branches must include Black members in their delegation in proportion to the workforce profile of all the Community employers covered by the branch.
- 5) Branches with 3 or more delegates must include one low paid, female member in the delegation. Low paid members are those with a basic hourly rate of £9.72 (at June 2017) or less (this rate to be amended in line with Rule Q of the UNISON rulebook).
- 6) Branches with 4 or more delegates must include one young member in the delegation (i.e. Age 26 or under at end of conference).
- 7) Branches can send two people to share one of the delegate places. However:
 - a. If they are sharing the female low paid seat, both sharers must be female low paid;

b. If they are sharing the young members' seat, both sharers must be young members.

i.e. Sending one sharer to meet either the low paid or young member requirement is not sufficient.

- 8) Branches should endeavour to include disabled members and LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) members in the delegation.

Overall, branches should also consider factors such as the balance between full time and part time workers, manual and non-manual workers, and different occupations and skills.

Representation is based on membership as at **30 September 2016**.

30 September 2017 membership figures will be available from the RMS in early January 2018. At this point the Conference Office will run a check to see if any branches are entitled to more or fewer delegates and action this as necessary.

Transgender Members

UNISON applies strict rules on proportionality in branch conference delegations, to ensure proper representation of women. Members who are in the process of transitioning gender may not yet have changed their UNISON membership details. For example, a member may wish to attend Community Conference as a woman, but still be attending work as a man. Members will be registered for Community Conference as the gender in which they will attend the Conference, irrespective of their gender recorded on the RMS.

To ensure that branch delegations including transgender members are not rejected on grounds of proportionality, please contact the Conference Office on 020-7121 5123 with information on any delegate submissions which include members attending conference in a different gender to that recorded on the RMS. Their confidentiality will be respected at conference.

Fitness to Attend Conference

With the introduction of Fitness to Work sick notes are slightly different now. Members who are off sick from work may have an illness/condition which means they can't perform some tasks but can perform others. They may have a fitness to work certificate which means they return to work with certain caveats – e.g. places limits on the types of tasks they can perform at work and duration.

So if a member is not at work and off sick and wants to attend the Community Conference they need to ask for a note from their GP indicating they are fit to attend the conference (travel/sitting for long periods). We also advise them to get a note from their employer agreeing to their attendance at conference, as this may be a different activity from those at work which they are not able to do.

Members should send a copy of the Fitness to Attend note to Stephanie Grant, Conference & Events Manager and Designated Health & Safety Manager, in advance of the conference. This information will be treated with confidentiality.

Appeals

Regions monitor the delegations submitted by branches to ensure compliance with the scheme. Branches have a right of appeal against a decision by their region that their proposed branch delegation is not in line with this scheme.

Extras *IMPORTANT NEW INFORMATION*****

From now on, requesting 'Extras' such as Childcare, Reasonable Adjustments or Facilitators on the Online Conference System (OCS) can only be done by the registered delegate themselves. Once a delegate is registered, the OCS will automatically send out an e-mail to the person with a web link which they can click on to access the OCS and input the Extras they require. For any assistance please contact your regional conference contact from the list in this bulletin.

Please help us to help the environment

We're doing our best to reduce the environmental impact of our conferences. This year, we are providing all delegates with the chance to opt out of being sent paper copies of our conference materials as part of the delegates' despatch. All these documents will be available online via the conference app, and on the UNISON website. You can then download them onto your laptop or tablet to view online while you are at conference. If you wish to opt out please indicate this on the 'Extras' screen options on the Online Conference System (OCS). If you do not opt out, you will be sent all documentation in hard copy form.

Reasonable Adjustments

UNISON aims to provide a fully accessible event to disabled members in accordance with our duties under the Equality Act. Requests for reasonable adjustments must be submitted by **Friday 19 January 2018**.

For any reasonable adjustments required, please complete the request online by the stated deadline. Authorisation for personal assistance/facilitation is required from your Branch Secretary that this expenditure will be approved.

Please remember that BSL Interpreters will only be available if requested in advance.

While we work within the context of the social model of disability this does not mean that UNISON can automatically provide all resources that are requested as adjustments. We have to consider the finite resources available both in terms of space and finances in order that we can balance our commitment to the social model with the resources available, and channel them to where they are needed most.

The process for managing requests that we adopted at 2016 National Delegate Conference has shown that with better information from members we can better address individual needs, allocate resources fairly, retain the ability to respond flexibly at conference and reduce the impact on other members.

Members requesting seating, tables, footrests, which impact on the space available on the floor of conference, will be asked what barriers they face that require this adjustment for their participation.

While not requesting detailed personal information, UNISON will require sufficient information in order to understand the barriers faced to get the right resources to the right people for this Conference. This will assist us in making adjustments that are meaningful and appropriate to the individual.

The union will determine the allocation of limited resources. If necessary, this may include reserving the right to seek additional information.

We will apply a necessary cut off point for requests, as close as possible to the conference while not impacting on the requirements to produce regional seating plans in good time for advance circulation. The deadline is **Friday 19 January 2018**.

We will retain a limited ability to respond to unexpected circumstances that affect a delegate at short notice prior to the conference.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)

If a delegate or visitor from your branch requires a PEEP for Southport Convention Centre, please ask them to indicate this online

Crèche and Babysitting

Please note that crèche provision is available **for delegates only** for children up to the age of 16 years. Arrangements have been made for Nipperbout, the company contracted to provide crèche facilities at all UNISON national conferences, to provide babysitting. Should you require this service please complete the request online by **Friday 19 January 2018**. Delegates and visitors are reminded that the cost for babysitting is borne by the branch so authorisation is required from your branch secretary that this expenditure will be approved.

Change of Delegate

Branches may change delegates up to the start of Conference. A member registering as a substitute branch delegate must have been eligible to represent the branch at the closing date for registration of delegates **Monday 18 December 2017**. Any changes must be in accordance with the Scheme of Branch Representation.

After **5.00pm, Monday 26 February** no more changes can be made on the OCS. If a branch needs to make an emergency change to its delegation after this date then an 'Emergency Change of Delegate' form will need to be completed.

This form will be available on the UNISON website from Tuesday 28 February and will also be available from the Conference Desk at Southport.

Conference Budget and Expenses

The conference budget covers travel costs for branch delegates and regional and national representatives to conferences. Branches cover subsistence and accommodation for branch delegates, plus incidental travel.

Travel Arrangements

Branches are asked to book all travel arrangements for Conference through Stewart Corporate Travel. Travel application forms are attached to this bulletin. Wherever

possible, please ensure train tickets are delivered to you directly as collecting them from stations incurs an extra charge. Branches are reminded that:

- Travel costs for **Delegates and Sharer 1's only** will be funded from National Office.
- Travel costs for **Visitors and Sharer 2's** must be paid for by the branch. **This is in line with Rule D.1.6 on shared delegates.**

Please note that a booking fee is applicable – further details from Stewart Corporate Travel.

Accommodation

Branches are encouraged to arrange accommodation through VisitSouthport. Using the Booking Service supports the work of our members in local government and ensures our continuing ability, as a not-for-profit organisation, to secure preferential rates for our conference venues.

The dedicated webpage for UNISON Community Conference is:

<https://ch.visitsouthport.com/unisoncommunity2018>

You can also telephone VisitSouthport on: 01704 533333 quoting 'UNISON Community Conference 2018'.

Branches using this booking service are reminded that there are no proforma invoicing facilities available with this system. Payment will need to be made at the point of booking with a debit or credit card.

Please ensure that members have written confirmation of any booked and paid for accommodation.

Submitting Motions, Amendments, Emergency Motions

Motions should be submitted via UNISON's Online Conference System (OCS).

The Preliminary Agenda will be published on **Friday 1 December 2017**. The Final Agenda will be published on **Friday 2 February 2018**.

Annual Report

The Annual Report of the Community Service Group Executive will be published by **Friday 26 January 2018**. If your branch wishes to raise questions on the Annual Report, these must be submitted in writing and received by **5pm, Friday 16 February 2018**. If you have not received an acknowledgement of receipt of your question within 5 working days, you should contact Gavin Edwards, National Officer, on 020-7121 5402 or g.edwards@unison.co.uk

If any branches have supplementary questions to their original written question then it would be helpful if advance written notice could be given of this, so that any additional information requested can be sought prior to the start of Conference. This process should enable Conference to deal with the Annual Report simply and quickly and leave more time for the discussion of motions.

Any questions on the Annual Report should be addressed to Gavin Edwards, National Officer, UNISON, 130 Euston Road, London NW1 2AY, or emailed to g.edwards@unison.co.uk.

Arrangements for Distribution of Card Voting Booklet

Your branch will be issued with your voting booklet at the venue. The card vote collection point will be located near the conference enquiry desk in the venue.

Prepaid Cards

Union Income Ltd have agreed to provide a corporate version of its prepaid card still with the UNISON branding. If your branch requires a prepaid card then this is the card that is the preferred option above others generally available.

An application will normally take about 14 working days to turnaround and you can request an information pack and application form by contacting:

UNISON Prepaid Plus Customer Services, 39-51 Highgate Road. London NW5 1RT or email customerservices@unisonprepaid.com

Credit Cards

If your branch does not specifically require a prepaid card the other best option is a credit card from Unity Trust Bank called Unity Corporate MultiPay Card. It is more flexible and is linked to branch current account. Details of the Corporate MultiPay card and further information on how to apply are available from their website at www.unity.co.uk/multipay. To help branches switch to this Unity Trust credit card, the bank has agreed to waive the one off administration fee of £50 for all current ALTO card customers who apply for a Multipay card.

Data Protection

Delegates should be aware that the information collected via the online conference system, in addition to information held on UNISON's membership database, will be used for statistical purposes and for the organising and administration of Conference in compliance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

**UNISON Community Conference,
Friday 2 to Sunday 4 March 2018, Southport Convention Centre
DELEGATE RAIL TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM**

Please read the guidelines overleaf before completing this form.

Delegate Name _____ A/C Code. 0-15-63-01

Branch Name _____ Branch No. _____

Branch Address _____

Additional Travellers

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Journey Details

	Date	Time of Travel	From	To	Sleeper Y/N
Outbound					
Return					

Please tick the appropriate boxes

Ticket Type Single ☐ Return ☐ Flexible ☐ Fixed ☐

Do you require any special Requirements, i.e. seating preference? **Y/N** If yes, please give details below

Do you hold a Travel Discount Card? Y/N

If the answer is yes, which card do you hold? _____

Please fill in the Name and Address tickets should be sent to:

Name _____	
Address _____	

Tel No. _____	E-mail _____

Listed below are contact details for STEWART CORPORATE TRAVEL:

Tel No: **0800 091 4272**

Fax: **0141 226 2960**

E-mail: unison@stewarttravelmanagement.com

All forms must be returned to Stewart Corporate Travel at the address overleaf as confirmation and authorisation of attendance.

GUIDELINES: DELEGATE RAIL TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM

1. Please complete in block capitals.
2. All information should be entered in its entirety as omissions may result in errors or delays. **Please note that as part of UNISON's current travel policy Stewart Corporate Travel will endeavour to obtain the cheapest available tickets; this will restrict any changes being made after booking, so please ensure all details entered are accurate.**
3. One form should be completed per delegate.
4. Any children or personal assistants accompanying you should also be entered on your form in the spaces provided. Children must be under 16 years of age and their age indicated on the form.
5. If you are unsure of the time of travel please put the time you wish to travel and Stewart Corporate Travel will book the cheapest option available nearest to these times.
6. Wherever possible, please ensure train tickets are delivered to you directly as collecting them from stations incurs an extra charge. Please ensure you enter your full address including the postcode in the box provided. This is the address your tickets will be delivered to.
7. Please give a contact telephone number where you can be contacted during office working hours i.e. 9am to 5pm or an e-mail address if available. This is in case Stewart Corporate Travel needs to contact you regarding your booking requirements.
8. If you hold a Travel Discount Card such as the Young Persons/Student or Disabled, Elderly Card please advise Stewart Corporate Travel where indicated. Please note if doing this you will need to take the card with you when you travel.
9. Journey details must be as precise and clear as possible indicating,
 - Date of travel, both outward and return
 - Preferred time of travel
 - Whether a seat reservation is required
 - Departure and destination stations
 - If you require a sleeper ticket
10. **This form should be completed and returned to Stewart Corporate Travel as soon as is possible.** This is to enable Stewart Corporate Travel to acquire the cheapest return fare. An alternative method of booking can be to telephone or fax Stewart Corporate Travel your details, their contact numbers can be found on the front of the form.
11. Stewart Travel Management address is:

3rd Floor, Sterling House
20 Renfield Street
Glasgow
G2 5AP

**UNISON Community Conference,
Friday 2 to Sunday 4 March 2018, Southport Convention Centre
DELEGATE AIR TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM**

Please read the guidelines overleaf before completing this form.

Delegate Name _____ A/C Code 0-15-63-01

Branch Name _____ Branch No _____

Branch Address _____

Additional Travellers

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Journey Details

OUTBOUND FLIGHT

DATE: _____ TIME OF FLIGHT: _____

JOURNEY FROM: _____ TO: _____

RETURN FLIGHT

DATE: _____ TIME OF FLIGHT: _____

JOURNEY FROM: _____ TO: _____

IF YOU HAVE ANY SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS - DIET, SEATING PREFERENCE, ETC. PLEASE GIVE DETAILS BELOW

Please fill in The Name and Address tickets should be sent to:

Name _____

Address _____

Tel No. _____ **E-mail** _____

Listed below are contact details for STEWART CORPORATE TRAVEL:

Tel No: **0800 091 4272**

Fax: **0141 226 2960**

E-mail: unison@stewarttravelmanagement.com

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3. One form should be completed per delegate.
4. Any children or personal assistants accompanying you should also be entered on your form in the spaces provided. Children must be under 16 years of age and their age indicated on the form.
5. If you are unsure of the time of the flights please put the time you wish to travel and Stewart Corporate Travel will book the cheapest option available nearest to these times.
6. Please ensure you enter your full address including the postcode in the box provided. This is the address your tickets will be delivered to.
7. Please give a contact telephone number where you can be contacted during office working hours i.e. 9am to 5pm or an e-mail address if available. This is in case Stewart Corporate Travel needs to contact you regarding your booking requirements.
8. Journey details must be as precise and clear as possible indicating,
 - Date of travel, both outward and return
 - Preferred time of travel
 - Departure and destination Airports
9. **This form should be completed and returned to Stewart Corporate Travel as soon as is possible.** This is to enable Stewart Corporate Travel to acquire the cheapest return Air fare. An alternative method of booking can be to telephone or fax Stewart Corporate Travel your details, their contact numbers can be found on the front of the form.
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Glasgow
G2 5AP

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VISITORS RAIL TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM

Please read the guidelines overleaf before completing this form.

Visitors Name _____

Branch Name _____ Branch No. _____

Branch Address _____

Additional Travellers

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Journey Details

	Date	Time of Travel	From	To	Sleeper Y/N
Outbound					
Return					

Please tick the appropriate boxes

Ticket Type Single ☐ Return ☐ Flexible ☐ Fixed ☐

Do you require any special Requirements, i.e. seating preference? **Y/N** If yes please give details below.

Do you hold a Travel Discount Card? Y/N

If the answer is yes, which card do you hold? _____

Please fill in the Name and Address tickets should be sent to:

Name _____	
Address _____	

Tel No. _____	E-mail _____

Listed below are contact details for STEWART CORPORATE TRAVEL:

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3. Stewart Corporate Travel will invoice the Branch direct for all visitors travel. This travel will not be met from National Funds.
4. One form should be completed per Visitor.
5. Any children or personal assistants accompanying you should also be entered on your form in the spaces provided. Children must be under 16 years of age and their age indicated on the form.
6. If you are unsure of the time of travel please put the time you wish to travel and Stewart Corporate Travel will book the cheapest option available nearest to these times.
7. If you hold a Travel Discount Card such as the Young Persons/Student, Disabled or Elderly Card please advise Stewart Corporate Travel where indicated. Please note if doing this you will need to take the card with you when you travel.
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9. Please give a contact telephone number where you can be contacted during office working hours i.e. 9am to 5pm or an e-mail address if available. This is in case Stewart Corporate Travel needs to contact you regarding your booking requirements.
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 - Whether a seat reservation is required
 - Departure and destination stations
 - If you require a sleeper ticket
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Visitors Name _____

Branch Name _____ Branch No _____

Branch Address _____

Additional Travellers

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Journey Details

OUTBOUND FLIGHT

DATE : _____ TIME OF FLIGHT : _____

JOURNEY FROM: _____ TO: _____

RETURN FLIGHT

DATE: _____ TIME OF FLIGHT: _____

JOURNEY FROM: _____ TO: _____

IF YOU HAVE ANY SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS - DIET, SEATING PREFERENCE, ETC. PLEASE GIVE DETAILS BELOW.

Please fill in The Name and Address tickets should be sent to:

Name _____	
Address _____	

Tel No. _____	E-mail _____

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G2 5AP

Dear Colleague,

Community Service Group Conference 2018 - Advice from the Standing Orders Committee

This circular sets out advice from the Community Service Group Standing Orders Committee on the submission of competent motions, amendments and emergency motions to the Community Service Group Conference.

Please assist in the preparation of Conference by submitting motions and amendments in good time and well within the specified deadlines.

General Advice on Competency of Motions

Branches are often disappointed when motions are ruled out of order by the Standing Orders Committee because of a technicality, for example where the motion has been drafted in a way which conflicts with the UNISON Rule Book. Members of the Standing Orders Committee will be happy to offer general guidance and assistance on procedures and standing orders.

i. Who can submit motions?

Rule P 1.3.5 sets out Standing Orders advice on those bodies which are eligible to submit motions. The bodies which can submit motions and amendments to the Community Service Conference are: Branches that organise Community members; the Community Service Group Executive; and Regional Community Committees. Self-Organised Groups at national level and the National Young Members' Forum may submit a total of two motions and two amendments to the Conference.

ii. Subject Matter — Service Group Issues

All motions, amendments and emergency motions submitted to the agenda for Community Conference must be relevant to the Community Service Group. Motions may instruct the Community Service Group Executive but may not commit the union nationally to a particular policy or campaign. Motions that are relevant to the union as a whole should be sent to National Delegate Conference. For example a Service Group Conference cannot set policy in relation to the use of Political Funds as this is a matter for National Delegate Conference.

iii. What constitutes a Service Group Issue?

Rule D.3.1.4 sets out the remit of the Service Group and the issues upon which it has autonomy to act on behalf of its members. These are to:

- determine the Service Group's general policy;
- negotiate:
 - pay and conditions of service
 - professional and occupational rules, standards, conditions and policy
 - industrial and other relations with employers to represent its members and participate in any joint negotiating machinery with powers in these matters
 - the settlement of any disputes arising from the employment of its members.

The Standing Orders Committee will only accept motions that are relevant to the areas of activity defined for Service Groups within Rule D.3.1.4.

iv. Citizenship Issues

Some issues, which initially may be relevant to the Community Service Group, may also be "citizenship" issues, i.e. of relevance to the whole Union because members experience them as workers and as members of the public. Such motions when submitted to National Delegate Conference can instruct the whole union to adopt a policy or campaign. A good example is the funding and provision of services such as social housing or social care — these issues affect all our members rather than just those employed in the community and voluntary sector and need to be debated by the union as a whole. This can be a difficult area and bodies which do not have submission rights to National Delegate Conference may particularly need to take advice as their motions will be ruled out of order rather than being referred to National Delegate Conference.

If you do submit a motion on a citizenship issue as defined above — this must only have relevance to Community Service Group workers.

An increasing number of motions are ruled out of UNISON conferences each year on these grounds and you should seek advice if in doubt.

v. Staffing Issues

Motions dealing with UNISON staffing matters are not appropriate for Conference debate. The National Executive Council and the General Secretary have responsibility for the employment of staff, under Rule D.2.10.1 and Rule D 2.10.2.

vi. Industrial Action

Rule O - Industrial Action gives exclusive power to the National Executive Council to authorise industrial action. To be lawful, industrial action must be in relation to a

current trade dispute between an individual group of employees and their employer. Therefore any motions relating to industrial action must not contravene Rule O or Rule B.4.5 Aims and Objectives "to perform such other duties and engage in such other business as a trade union may lawfully undertake."

vii. Political Fund

Matters relating to the Labour Party, both in relation to internal issues and in respect of matters to be pursued at Labour Party Conference, are properly dealt with by the Affiliated Political Fund through its own structures, not Community Conference. The rules governing the Political Fund include both the Affiliated and the General Political Funds.

viii Legal Reasons

Motions may also be ruled out of order due to a number of legal reasons: Legal Jeopardy - a motion which places the union at risk of legal action from a third party. The Standing Orders Committee do not enter into protracted legal arguments on whether or not this third party would have a strong case, but rather will take the decision not to place the union at risk. Legal jeopardy will also apply when the motion refers to or is relevant to current legal proceedings against UNISON or individuals acting in a UNISON capacity.

Other legal reasons might be due to the motion being in breach of UNISON rules - for example, it may breach our values outlined in Rule B or our rules on legal representation in Rule K.

ix. Legal Proceedings

The principle applied by the SOC is that the Conference cannot compromise existing or potential legal proceedings for either party in a case. Proceedings include potential, past or current disciplinary issues.

If there is a possibility that a motion may prejudice proceedings, the SOC will seek legal advice. If the advice is that a motion either directly or indirectly refers or could lead to reference to a particular case either expressly or by implication, or if a decision at Conference could be used in a case by any party, the SOC will rule the motion out of order. So on some very limited occasions it may be necessary to rule a motion out of order, not because of its content, but because it would be impossible to debate the motion without the details of a particular legal case arising.

Motions that call on the union to break the law are not competent. The SOC takes legal advice on the content of motions, particularly where there appears to be libel or the content is or would lead to breaches of the law and/ or rules. Motions are considered on a case by case basis.

x. Rule P1.3.6

This rule gives the Standing Orders Committee the power to recommend to Conference that, as a result of certain motions only affecting devolved

bargaining groups – i.e. Scotland, Northern Ireland, England and Wales – voting may be restricted to those groups. It would be helpful if this could be noted when drafting motions so that it is clear whether the motion will apply to the whole Service Group or only certain groups.

The Standing Orders Committee is keen to avoid the situation whereby a motion may apply in part to the whole union and in part to a particular pay bargaining group. This can cause confusion at Conference as delegates may be able to vote in part of the debate and not others. We are considering how best to facilitate discussion of specific pay agreements and claims can be discussed at Conference and submitting bodies may wish to consider whether their motion is intended to apply to a specific group or set general policy.

xi. Amendments

Amendments are subject to the same rules as motions as set out above. They should not be used to promote essentially alternative motions or as merely a substitute for voting against a motion. Therefore amendments are likely to be out of order (as wrecking amendments) if they:

- Introduce a direct negative into the motion;
- Reduce the motion to a mere re-statement of existing policy;
- Seek to change fundamentally the purpose of the motion.

xii. Guidelines on procedures for submitting motions, amendments to motion and emergency motions

Attached is a set of guidelines produced by the Standing Orders Committee on procedures for submitting motions, amendments, and emergency motions. Branches are asked to read them carefully prior to completion on the Online Conference System (OCS).

xiii. Emergency Motions

The criteria that the Standing Orders Committee applies to emergency motions are included in the attached guidelines, to assist branches and other submitting bodies when judging whether or not to submit an emergency motion. Your attention is drawn to the final point in paragraph 7 of the guidelines: The Branch will have to show that the subject of the emergency motion cannot be dealt with through normal channels, other than at Community Service Group Conference, for its aims to be achieved. For example, many motions can be dealt with by the Region, Branch or Service Group Executive and do not require a Conference decision to be actioned. The strict application of these criteria will ensure that only matters of a genuine emergency to the Community Service Group will be admitted on to the agenda as emergency motions. The Standing Orders Committee will then timetable approved emergency motions for debate. It should be noted that only branches or the Service Group Executive can submit emergency motions.

The Standing Orders Committee hope that these guidelines will be useful in assisting Branches, Regions and National Committees in preparing motions for

Conference and will reduce the number ruled out of order. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Julie

**Julie Hallam
Secretary
Standing Orders Committee
Community Service Group**

**Standing Orders Committee Guidelines for Submission of
Motions, Amendments and Emergency Motions to
Community Service Group Conference**

1. These guidelines have been prepared by the Standing Orders Committee, in light of experience, in order to assist submitting bodies.
2. For the purpose of these guidelines submitting bodies are those bodies within the Union which have the right under Rule P.1. 3. 5 to submit items for the agenda of a Service Group Conference.
3. Motions etc should be submitted online via the OCS.
4. The date of the meeting which decided to submit the item should be recorded, together with the type of meeting. The Standing Orders Committee has reaffirmed that, for branches, only the texts of motions which have been considered by a branch meeting, or a branch committee meeting, are eligible for submission to Conference. Local branch rules that may include the delegation of powers to other bodies will not be taken into account when applying the national rule requirements for Conference. Therefore branches must state clearly the type of meeting at which their motion was agreed. Meetings must be quorate and this may be checked, particularly for emergency motions.
5. It is the responsibility of the submitting body to ensure that the online motion is properly completed. If you need help or advice contact a member of the Standing Orders Committee, or an SOC Officer.
6. All agenda items must be submitted prior to deadlines determined by the Rules. The dates will be notified by circular. It would be helpful to the SOC if submitting bodies could submit items as early as possible. The SOC advises submitting bodies not to schedule meetings too close to the deadline.
7. An emergency motion should be submitted, in accordance with Rule P.11.2 and paragraphs 4 and 5 above, via the OCS.

The same requirements apply to emergency motions as for motions, even those referring to events which take place after the deadline for emergency motions. The Standing Orders Committee will not take into account delegated powers within particular branches. The motion must be considered by a meeting of the branch or branch committee.

Branches which submit emergency motions during Conference will have to provide the Standing Orders Committee with details of their branch rules covering advance notice for convening meetings and branch quorum.

The criteria that the Standing Orders Committee applies to emergency motions are published below, to assist branches when judging whether or not to submit an emergency motion. Attention is drawn to the final point – that the

subject cannot be dealt with through normal channels, other than at Community Service Group Conference, for its aims to be achieved. The submitting body will have to show:

- The matter couldn't be raised in debate on the agenda.
- The action called for is not covered by another motion, amendment or composite.
- The facts giving rise to the subject matter have occurred since the closing date for the submission of amendments to motions. (It is not sufficient that the branch was not aware of the facts until after the closing date).
- The subject cannot be dealt with through normal channels other than Community Service Group Conference.

The motion should be accompanied by an explanation of the reasons for the item not being submitted in accordance with the normal procedures and deadlines.