



UNISON Conference Bulletin

January 2014

Local Government Service Group Conference 2014

Conference Team

020 7121 5123

This bulletin contains the timetable and information for
2014 Local Government Service Group Conference.

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

Local Government Service Group Conference 2014 will be held at the Brighton Centre, Brighton starting 9.30am Sunday 15 June, ending 5pm Monday 16 June 2014

The Brighton Centre
Kings Road
Brighton
East Sussex
BN1 2GR

Tel: 01273 290131 Fax: 01273 779980

Web: www.brightoncentre.co.uk

Timetable

Deadline for Submission of Motions	12.00 noon	Friday 21 February 2014
Publication of Preliminary Agenda		Friday 14 March 2014
Deadline for Submission of Delegates	5.00pm	Friday 28 March 2014
Deadline for crèche places and reasonable adjustment requests for access	5.00pm	Friday 11 April 2014
Deadline for Submission of Amendments	12.00 noon	Thursday 17 April 2014
Publication of Final Agenda		Friday 9 May 2014
Deadline for Emergency Motions	12.00 noon	Friday 6 June 2014
Deadline for submitting Change of Delegates online on the OCS	5.00pm	Wednesday 11 June 2014

Enclosed with this Conference Bulletin, and available for download on the conference webpage www.unison.org.uk/conference/localgov.asp are:

- Delegate Travel Form
- Visitor Travel Form
- Advice from Standing Orders Committee

**There are NO paper forms for motion or delegation submission.
You must use the Online Conference System (OCS) instead.
See next section for full information.**

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 are also able to enter motions but do not have authority to submit them on behalf of a branch.

At regional level, the regional head of the service group is 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, crèche places and babysitting, which should be made by the deadline of **Friday 11 April 2014**. Alternatively, the branch can enter the individual's reasonable adjustments or crèche places on behalf of the member.

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.

What if our branch does not have computer access? If you are concerned that your branch does not have access to a computer, an e-mail address or the internet, you are advised to contact your Regional Organiser or another regional member of staff as soon as possible. They can advise you of training and funding available for IT development.

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:

Eastern	Amanda Tickner	01245 608909	a.tickner@unison.co.uk
East Midlands	Mark Ward	0115 847 5408	m.ward@unison.co.uk
Greater London	Shelley Davey	0207 535 6649	s.davey@unison.co.uk
	Gloria Akano-Williams	0207 535 6551	g.akano-williams@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	John Sharp	0161 661 6752	j.sharp@unison.co.uk
Scotland	Rosaleen Rodgers	0141 342 2816	r.rodgers@unison.co.uk
	Caroline Phillip	0131 226 0075	c.phillip@unison.co.uk
South East	Kieran Pearson	01483 406510	k.pearson@unison.co.uk
South West	Jenn Gollings	01823 285336	j.gollings@unison.co.uk
Cymru/Wales	Sarah Evans	01792 483923	s.evans@unison.co.uk
West Midlands	Claire Kenny	0121 685 3174	c.kenny@unison.co.uk
Yorks & Humberside	Laraine Senior	0113 218 2333	l.senior@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 vote:

- National Self-Organised Groups
- Regional Service Groups

- National Sector Committees
- National Young Members' Forum

Branch Representation

- Branches with up to 1,000 members are entitled to elect one delegate per 500 members or part thereof.
- Branches with over 1,000 members are entitled to elect one additional delegate per 1,000 members or part thereof.

Representation is based on membership as at **30 September 2013**.

Proportionality and Fair Representation

The NEC's Development and Organisation Committee (D & O) has reviewed the Scheme of Branch Representation for National Delegate Conference (NDC) and agreed the Scheme for 2014. The Committee has also stated that the NDC Scheme should in future apply to all Service Group conferences, as there remains an ongoing concern about the under-participation of groups such as young and low paid members and women and Black members in particular.

The branch representation levels remain unchanged (see above). Below are the requirements for ensuring proportionality and fair representation of branch delegations to Local Government Conference 2014.

- 1) If the delegation only comprises one full delegate, then this delegate may be male or female.
- 2) The gender make up of the delegation must be based on the gender make up of the branch.
If a branch is unable to elect enough women delegates to meet proportionality, then the women's places on the delegation must remain unfilled. This is consistent with the approach to proportionality taken elsewhere in the union.
- 3) Branches with over 2,000 members must include one low paid woman member in the delegation.
- 4) Branches with over 3,000 members must include one young member in the delegation (i.e. Age 26 or under at end of conference).
- 5) Branches can send two people, in any gender combination, to share one of the delegate places. However:
 - a. If the entire delegation entitlement comprises of just the two sharers, then at least one must be female.
 - b. if they are sharing the low paid female seat, both sharers must be low paid females;
 - c. 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.

When calculating proportionality, each sharer counts as one delegate.
- 7) Branches must include black members in their delegation in proportion to the workforce profile of the employers covered by the branch.
- 8) Branches should endeavour to include disabled members and LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) members in the delegation.
- 9) Overall, branches should also consider factors such as the balance between full time and part time workers, manual and non-manual workers, different occupations and skills.

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 the Local Government Service Group Conference as a woman, but still be attending work as a man. Members will be registered for the Local Government Service Group 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 online delegate submissions which include members attending conference in a different gender to that recorded on the RMS. Their confidentiality will be respected at conference.

Data Protection

Delegates and branches 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.

Late delegate registrations will not be approved. There will be no exceptions to this. The appeals mechanism in the regions is for the composition of delegations, not for late submissions. Regions have to apply the deadlines strictly.

Appeals

Any appeals concerning the composition of branch delegations shall be considered at regional level via a regional appeals panel convened by the regional secretary.

Crèche and Babysitting

Please note that crèche provision is available 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 **5pm, Friday 11 April 2014**. Delegates 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.

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 online by **5pm, Friday 11 April 2014**.

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.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)

If a delegate or visitor from your branch requires a PEEP for the Brighton Centre, please ask them to indicate this with their online request.

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 **Friday 28 March 2014**. Any changes must be in accordance with the Scheme of Branch Representation.

After **5.00pm Wednesday 11 June**, no more changes can be made on 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 **Thursday 12 June** and will also be available at the regional pre-conference delegates meeting for Local Government Conference. The form will also be available from the conference desk at Brighton.

For Local Government Conference, the regional head of local government or the regional secretary must sign the form to approve the changes.

Branches are reminded that changes to a delegation can only be made up to the start of a conference. There are no exceptions to this rule.

UNISON's Impact on the Environment - Important Travel Arrangements

Please consider the impact on the environment when making your decision on how to travel to Conference.

Branches are asked to book all travel arrangements for Conference through Stewart Corporate Travel. Travel application forms are attached to this bulletin. 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. *Please note that a booking fee is applicable – further details from Stewart Corporate Travel.*

As part of our efforts to reduce the environmental impact of UNISON conferences we will also be providing information on public transport available in Brighton.

Accommodation

Branches are encouraged to arrange accommodation through VisitBrighton. 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. For full details of current availability and for bookings please go to: <http://resweb.passkey.com/go/undc14>

Or you can telephone VisitBrighton on 01273 292626 or e-mail delegates@visitbrighon.com

Branches are often asked for credit cards to secure deposits and payment for delegate accommodation at conferences. UNISON's Finance Department has issued advice to branches on the use of prepaid credit cards, which are a secure way of paying for such expenses, enabling branches to limit the amount that can be spent by transferring an amount onto the card. In all other respects it operates in the same way as a normal credit card but does not expose the branch to fraud or probity issues.

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

Branches can apply for a prepaid credit card from Unity Trust Bank. Details of the website are included below.
<http://www.unity.co.uk/other-services/corporate-alto-mastercard-prepaid-card/apply/>

Arrangements for Distribution of Card Voting Booklet

Branches will collect card voting booklets on the first morning of Conference, before Conference starts, from the card vote collection point at the Brighton Centre.

Advice on Submission of Motions

Please refer to the advice from the Standing Orders Committee about submission of motions, enclosed with this Conference Bulletin.

The Preliminary Agenda will be published on Friday 14 March 2014. The Final Agenda will be published in newspaper format and online on Friday 9 May 2014. The motions and amendments will also be included in the Conference Documents which are sent to all delegates in June 2014.

UNISON Local Government Service Group Conference, Sunday 15 June – Monday 16 June 2014, Brighton Centre

DELEGATE RAIL TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM

Please read the guidelines overleaf before completing this form.

Delegate Name _____ A/C Code. 0-15-50-01

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: 0845 872 4432

Fax: 01292 312259

E-mail: unison@stewartcorporatetravel.co.uk

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. 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 Corporate Travel Address:

10 Ayr Street
Troon
Ayrshire
KA10 6EB

**UNISON Local Government Service Group Conference,
Sunday 15 June – Monday 16 June 2014, Brighton Centre
DELEGATE AIR TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM**

Please read the guidelines overleaf before completing this form.

Delegate Name _____ A/C Code 0-15-50-01

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: **0845 872 4432** **Fax:** **01292 312259**

E-mail: unison@stewartcorporatetravel.co.uk

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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.
10. Stewart Corporate Travel address:

10 Ayr Street
Troon
Ayrshire
KA10 6EB

**UNISON Local Government Service Group Conference,
Sunday 15 June – Monday 16 June 2014, Brighton Centre
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	_____

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Tel No: 0845 872 4432

Fax: 01292 312259

E-mail: unison@stewartcorporatetravel.co.uk

All forms must be returned to Stewart Corporate Travel at the address overleaf as confirmation and authorisation of attendance. *Please note – a booking fee is applicable.*

GUIDELINES: VISITOR 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. 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.
8. Please ensure you enter your full address including the postcode in the box provided. This is the address your tickets will be delivered to.
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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Ayrshire
KA10 6EB

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VISITOR AIR 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

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 _____	
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Tel No. _____	E-mail _____

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11. Stewart Corporate Travel address:

10 Ayr Street
Troon
Ayrshire
KA10 6EB

SOC/1/2014

Ron Harley 01273 544021/01634 285710

To:

Secretaries of Local Government Branches
Regional Heads of Local Government
Registered Sectional/Professional Bodies - for information

January 2014

Dear Colleague

Local Government Group Conference 2014 – Advice from the Standing Orders Committee

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

Branch Secretaries and Branch Chairs will have received information about the submission of motions, amendments and emergency motions for UNISON's Local Government Group Conference to be held in The Brighton Centre, Kings Road, Brighton, from Sunday 15 June to Monday 16 June 2014. This information is also available on the UNISON website at <https://www.unison.org.uk/about/events-and-conferences/national-conferences/local-government-conference-2014/>.

Please assist in the preparation of Conference by submitting motions and amendments on the Online Conference System (OCS) 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 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 who can submit motions and amendments to the Local Government Conference are:- Local government branches; the Local Government Group Executive; Regional Local Government Committees and National Sector 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 Local Government Conference must be relevant to the Local Government Service Group. Motions may instruct the Local Government 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 Local Government 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 housing or social care – these issues affect all our members rather than just those employed in local government 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 Local Government Service Group workers. For example, a motion on School Meals would be able to call for a campaign to improve the pay and conditions or training opportunities for School Meals Staff – but could not call for a campaign on the issue as a whole as this would be a National Delegate Conference matter.

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

v Staffing Issues

Motions dealing with 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 – The National Executive Council has exclusive power to authorise industrial action (Rule O). To be lawful, industrial action must be in relation to a trade dispute as defined by s. 218 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. Motions calling for industrial action over privatisation or over ‘the cuts’ do not fall within the legal definition of a trade dispute and so must not be debated as this would put the Union in legal jeopardy. Any motions relating to industrial action must not contravene Rule O or Rule B.4.5 which requires the Union to act lawfully. Motions or amendments must not describe previous or current disputes as being ‘against privatisation’ or similar such words, as this could leave the Union open to legal challenge

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 Local Government 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 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 – motions that instruct the Service group to submit equal pay claims on behalf of a group of workers will fall into this category.

ix Legal advice concerning Equal Pay and UNISON Conferences

As you will be aware, the Union, its activists and staff have been under threat by no win no fee lawyers (NWNF) contesting the union's equal pay strategy. In addition, there are currently proceedings brought by employers against UNISON arising out of its equal pay negotiations. UNISON continues to need to take great care when dealing with equal pay issues and a cautious approach must be adopted in relation to communications on equal pay matters within the union.

As has been the case in previous conferences, it remains crucial therefore that the union not allow any motions relating to equal pay on the agenda at UNISON conferences owing to the current litigation and the continuing potential for allegations of negligence and sex discrimination against the union. This is because NWNF lawyers and others are able to gain access to everything which is said in union forums, including motions and debate at conference, and use this to further their claims against the union, our activists and staff. The union's legal advice is that our defence of these claims may be seriously weakened if there are speeches impinging on litigation. For this reason the SOC are advised not to allow any motions relating to equal pay on the agenda.

x Calls vs Instructs

Branches should be aware that the SOC does see a distinction between motions that call on another body or part of the union to do something and one which instructs them. When using 'instruct' submitters of motions should be clear that Local Government Conference does indeed have the power to instruct this body and in addition that the body being instructed has the power to undertake the action. Branches should also be aware that the SOC will check motions that call on a union body to 'ensure' an action takes place to see if that is within their powers to do so. If in doubt Branches should use the phrase 'seek to ensure'. Even when using 'call' submitters should still check Conference has the power to call on this body and the body has the power to undertake the action.

xi Pension Schemes

Individual occupational pension schemes are normally debated as bargaining issues at service group conferences but submitters are reminded, if doing so, that the Local Government Pension Scheme has membership across more than one UNISON service group.

xii 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 are 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 – for example where a motion on general pay policy is amended to refer solely to the NJC pay agreement. 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 how specific pay agreements and claims can be discussed at Conference. However, submitting bodies may wish to consider whether their motion is intended to apply to a specific group or set general policy.

xiii 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.

xiv 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 8 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 Local Government 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 Local Government Group will be admitted on to the agenda as emergency motions. The Standing Orders Committee will then consider whether to timetable approved emergency motions for debate.

xv Challenges to SOC decisions

If the SOC rules your motion or amendment out of order, a letter will be sent by the SOC with reasons why, via the Online Conference System (OCS). If you are not happy with the decision and want the SOC to reconsider, you must contact us **in writing via the OCS**. Please remember it is not possible to reword a motion after the deadline, to make it competent.

To appeal against motions ruled out of order the deadline is

12.00 noon Friday 11 April 2014.

To appeal against amendments ruled out of order the deadline is

12 noon Tuesday 27 May 2014.

It will not be possible to start an appeal on the Conference floor. Only those that have corresponded with the SOC will be able to ask supplementary questions on the Conference floor.

Further Advice

The Standing Orders Committee hope that these guidelines will be useful 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 or seek advice from your regional standing orders representative.

Yours sincerely

Ron Harley

Ron Harley
Secretary, Local Government Group Standing Orders Committee

Standing Orders Committee Guidelines for Submission of Motions, Amendments and Emergency Motions to Local Government 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 must be submitted electronically via the Online Conference System (OCS). Advice and details of the OCS will be issued to Branches and other submitting bodies.
4. The date of the meeting which decided to submit the item should be recorded on the OCS, 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 on the motion form the type of meeting at which their motion was agreed.

Meetings must be quorate and this may be checked, particularly for emergency motions.

5. Using the OCS, motions can be authorised at branch level by either the branch secretary or chair. The other will receive e-mail copies of the motion as soon as it is submitted. At regional level, the Regional Head of Local Government will be authorised to submit the motion, with the Regional Local Government Chairperson receiving an instant e-mail copy. This process is replicated at national level for national bodies and their relevant secretaries and chairs.
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.

8. 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 Local Government Group Conference, for its aims to be achieved.

The submitting body will have to show:

- The matter could not 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 Local Government 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.