

# **2015 NDMC Final Agenda And Order of Business**

**Organising and Recruitment**

**Negotiating and Bargaining**

**Campaigning**

**Equalities**

**International**

# ORDER OF BUSINESS

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## Submitted by

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**Motion Title**

**Submitted by**

**Amendment Ruled Out Of Order**

CARE WORKERS – PROMOTE THE NEED TO RECORD VIOLENT INCIDENTS	National Black Members' Committee
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**Emergency Motion Ruled Out Of Order**

EBOLA VIRUS CRISIS	National Black Members' Committee
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## Organising and Recruitment

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### 1. DEFINING BLACK

Conference, despite the work done by the National Black Members' Committee in producing a definition of 'Black' in UNISON in 2013 there continues to be questions about using 'Black' when addressing Black members. We have also found that branches and Regions in the union continue to use other definitions when describing 'Black' members, such as 'BME, BEM and BMEA. These are not terms used for members in UNISON. In UNISON we use 'Black' in its broad political and inclusive sense.

Conference, we understand that such phrases like 'Minority Ethnic' and 'Ethnic Minority Asian' are in wide spread official use today in our communities and workplaces. However, we believe that these phrases have clear disadvantages in the connotation of being marginal or less important. Additionally, in many neighbourhoods, towns and cities in Britain it is statistically inaccurate and misleading to describe Black groups as a minority.

Conference, we believe that time changes many things, and language evolves, however using terminology is always important in the way we express our intentions and direction. Using 'Black' is about creating unity in our fight against deep rooted racism within our workplaces and society. We are and we will continue to be judged by the colour of our skin and therefore we cannot afford to be divided, we need to stand united under one definition 'Black'.

Conference therefore asks the NBMC to:

- 1) Work with regional Black members' committees to develop a short presentation on defining Black in UNISON that can be used at regional council meetings;
- 2) Produce an article for publication for the UNISON magazines;
- 3) Produce a leaflet which can be distributed at UNISON conferences in 2015.

**Submitted by: National Black Members' Committee**  
**NBMC Policy: Support**

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## **2. ENCOURAGING BLACK WOMEN MEMBERS IN BRANCH**

Nelson Mandela once said: "Education is the most powerful weapon which we can use to change the world". However, Conference is disappointed to hear that many Black women members and activists are not taking up the opportunity to attend UNISON training courses. Anecdotal evidence would suggest that there are two reasons for this. Firstly, it has been suggested that many Black women are not aware of UNISON's training courses. Secondly, if they are aware of the course, they may not know who to approach for further assistance to apply and attend the course.

However, in order to increase the participation of Black women in UNISON courses conference recognises that it will take more than just the efforts of the NBMC. Conference delegates also have a responsibility to raise awareness of UNISON courses and offer support to our Black sisters to attend the courses.

Conference therefore, calls on the National Black Members' Committee to work with the Learning and Organising Section (LAOS) to:

- 1) Review the attendance monitoring data to quantify the extent of the problem;
- 2) Develop a robust communications strategy to ensure Black women members and activists are not unintentionally excluded from courses;
- 3) Write regular articles for Black Action highlighting UNISON courses;
- 4) Liaise with the National Women's Committee to highlight training opportunities through their communication channels as well;
- 5) Report back to the 2016 Black members' conference with the outcome of the review and communication strategy.

**Submitted by: National Black Members' Committee**  
**NBMC Policy: Support**

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### **3. UNDER-REPRESENTATION OF BLACK WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE**

Cuts made by the Con Dem coalition have had a major effect on the public sector where the majority of the workforce are women. Black women are particularly affected by continued discrimination and under-representation in the workforce as a whole, and in senior roles. Evidence indicates that where Black women are employed this is predominantly in the low and junior administrative roles within the workplace. This situation is made even worse where public sector work is outsourced and Black women are increasingly placed on Zero Hour contracts with little opportunity to progress in the organisation.

UNISON freedom of information (FOI) requests in both London and the North West demonstrate that Black women are more likely to be selected for redundancy, even where they are already under-represented in the workforce.

Conference notes with concern the very small number of Black women in senior positions throughout public sector organisations, particularly in an environment where there is an increase in the number of Black women graduates from universities. Black women report that they are often 'passed over' for promotion and do not receive the support and development necessary to equip them to be able to move into senior positions.

Conference welcomes the UNISON manifesto on securing the future of our public services which outlines "a renewed commitment to the public sector workforce". The progress and development of Black women in the public sector must be an integral part of this commitment, including the necessary support to enable Black women to reach their full potential.

Conference therefore calls on the national Black members committee (NBMC) to:

- 1) extend the current FOI research and include in any new FOI request the remit to seek data from employers about the distribution of Black women at all levels within the structure of the organisation;
- 2) use the results of the research to raise employers' awareness of the disproportionately low number of Black women in senior positions, and encourage employers to address this situation with suitable mentoring and training to enable Black women to reach their full potential at their workplace;

- 3) utilise the challenging racism in the workplace toolkit to examine employers recruitment and retention policies and highlight this disparity, thereby enabling UNISON representatives to challenge blatant discrimination;
- 4) work with UNISON Learning and Organising Services to educate and support Black women to increase their confidence to access the structures within their workplace in order to make progress in their career;
- 5) work with national service group executives to raise awareness of the disproportionate impact of the ongoing attacks on Black women; encourage the service groups to develop guidance and policies on supporting Black women in the workplace and to place equalities at the heart of the bargaining agenda.

**Submitted by: National Women's Committee**  
**NBMC Policy: Support**

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#### **4. INCREASING BLACK WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN UNISON**

Conference acknowledges that UNISON is committed to fair representation and proportionality and has enshrined this in our rule D4.1. Women make up more than three quarters of our membership and in the public sector many of these members are Black Women. However, we see very few of these Black women represented at branch, regional and national committee level. Nonetheless, national statistics inform us that Black people are still amongst those most likely to join a union.

Conference acknowledges that further specific work can assist and encourage the participation of women members who may feel marginalised in our union and that this would certainly be in line with the aims and objectives of self organisation in UNISON as specified in the rule book (D 4.2.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.4).

Additionally many of our Black women members working in health, social care and local government are low paid. Further, recent Freedom of Information (FOI) requests carried out regionally confirm that in many of our local authorities Black women, whilst poorly reflected in number within the workforce (5% rather than the 12% statistical expectation) are more likely to be selected for redundancy (70%) than their white counterparts. It is therefore vitally important that UNISON gives a voice

to these women.

A Motion 'Encouraging Black Activists' was carried at UNISON National Black Members' Conference 2014. The motion suggested many ways in which this could be done. For example the NBMC could look into Black members' representation in SOGs and branches and support and encourage involvement in other areas of the union. This would enable the union, and our Black members' stewards and representatives in particular, to respond to the disenfranchisement taking place in their workplaces.

In support of the recommendations of that motion, conference expects that at a national level everything possible is done to encourage the work done regionally and in branches to actively promote the involvement of women in all their diversity, giving due consideration to all the self organised groups, and specifically in this case, Black women's representation to the various SOGs.

Conference therefore asks that the National Black Members' Committee works across regions to encourage and support branches to do what they can to empower Black women to become activists; be involved with their SOGs and participate in their branch committees, their regional committees and the wider union.

At a time when UKIP is promoting division in our communities it is crucial that UNISON continues to lead the way in its conviction that diversity in our society adds value to us all.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Black Members' Committee to:

- 1) Work with the National Women's Committee in conducting a survey of branches nationally to establish:
  - a) How many Black women members are involved at branch level;
  - b) How many Black women members are represented within the women's self organised groups (where they exist);
- 2) Work with regions and branches to actively encourage the inclusion of Black women; to value their involvement and recognise the importance of diversity; and to ensure that efforts are made for Black women to be fairly represented in the membership of national committees;

- 3) Make known the numbers of Black women delegates attending National Black Members' Conference in order to document progress in working toward their greater inclusion at all levels of the union structure;
- 4) Report progress to the National Black Members Conference 2015 with a view to continuing the work and publishing final results in the annual report to National Black Members' Conference 2016;
- 5) Include this work in the National Black Members Committee action plan.

**Submitted by: National Women's Committee**  
**NBMC Policy: Support**

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## **5. ENCOURAGING DIVERSITY IN WOMEN'S COMMITTEE'S – BLACK WOMEN**

In UNISON more than 70% of our total membership are women. UNISON is committed to fair representation and proportionality (Rule D4.1). However, we know in the public sector where many of our members are Black Women we see very few represented at Branch, Regional and Committee level; despite statistics nationally telling us that Black people are still amongst those most likely to join a union. In furtherance of the Rule Book aims of self-organisation, (D 4.2.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.4) and in line with the union's aims and objectives; we acknowledge that further specific work can assist and encourage the participation of members who may feel marginalised. A high percentage of Black Women members can be seen working in health, social care and local government, many as low paid members and at a time when UKIP is promoting division in our communities; it is crucial that UNISON continues to lead the way in its view that diversity in our society adds value to us all.

We know from Freedom of Information requests carried out regionally; that in many of our Local Authorities Black Women, whilst poorly reflected in number within the workforce (5% rather than 12% statistical expectation) are more likely to be selected for redundancy than their white counterparts. We need to do what we can to give a voice to these women.

A Motion was carried at UNISON National Black Members Conference 2014 which was "Encouraging Black activists". The motion suggested

many ways in which we could do this, for example to look into Black Members' representation in our SOGs and Branches; support and encourage involvement in other areas of the union in order for them to come together and respond to the disenfranchisement taking place in their workplaces.

In line with the recommendations of that motion, we see it as extremely important that at a National level we would do what we can to encourage work done regionally and in branches to actively promote the involvement of Women in all their diversity, and with consideration to all the self organised groups, specifically in this case, Black Women.

We ask that the National Black members Committee works across regions to encourage Branches to do what they can to empower ALL Women, Black, Lesbian Gay Bisexual, Disabled, women from all cultures and religious backgrounds, to become activists and to become involved with their SOGs, with consideration to becoming stewards and increasing their participation in their Branch Committees with the view to becoming active in their regions and the wider union as a whole.

Conference asks that the National Black Members' Committee:

- 1) Conduct a survey of Branches Nationally to establish:
  - a) The UNISON membership of Black Women within branches mapped against the level of employment of Black Women for the employing bodies;
  - b) Work with National women's committee to try and establish how many Black Disabled, Lesbian Gay and Bisexual Women members are involved at branch level;
  - c) How many Black women are represented within the Women's self organised groups (where they exist).
- 2) Work with branches to actively encourage the inclusion of Black women (where appropriate) across the country and value their involvement and diversity;
- 3) Make known the figures as to how many Black women delegates attend National Black members conference in order to document our continuous progress in working toward their greater inclusion;

- 4) Report progress to the National Black members conference 2015 with a view to continuing the work and publishing final results in the Annual Report of the National Black members Conference 2016;
- 5) Include this work in the National Black members Committee action plan.

**Submitted by:** *North West Region*

**NBMC Policy:** *Support with qualifications*

### **Amendment 5.1**

In the fifth paragraph, starting 'We ask that the National Black Members' Committee works....' insert 'Transgender,' after 'Bisexual'

In action point 1b) delete 'and' after 'Gay', add 'and Transgender' after 'Bisexual'.

**Submitted by:** *National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee*

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## **6. SUPPORTING BLACK OFFICERS TO ACHIEVE PROMOTION**

It is an accepted fact that the makeup of a government institution should be reflective of the local demography of the area in which it is located. For many years this has been an aspiration. Recently, most have made tremendous strides to address this situation.

Unfortunately what this has resulted in is a skewed workforce. The balance is now more representative of the local demography but Black officers primarily constitute the majority of the lowest tier of employees.

Recent FOI request analysis of local authority redundancy statistics for the last 2 years bears out the fact that Black people have been more disproportionately made redundant over the last 3 years. Arguing the facts of this point is not beneficial to either those who have already lost their jobs or those who are likely to be at risk when the next inevitable waves of cuts start.

A principal solution to reduce the risk and/or impact of cuts on Black workers is to ensure that more Black members are further up within the hierarchy (food chain) of the organisations they are employed to.

Conference instructs NBMC to contact the training and education arms of Unison and request a joint work programme that will:

- 1) Design and effectively promote/communicate courses ear-marked for Black members to further advance their academic acumen therefore improving their likelihood of being considered for promotions.
- 2) Create a programme to mentor and support Black officers to chart a pathways that will enable them to be qualified for promotions.
- 3) Develop a support network to assist Black workers with completing applications & submissions for promotion recruitment and insight of interviewing techniques to further enhance their chances of success at interviews.

**Submitted by:** *Eastern Region*  
**NBMC Policy:** *Support*

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## **Negotiating and Bargaining**

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### **7. BLACK WOMEN AND FIBROIDS**

Conference, fibroids are small benign tumours that grow on the walls of the womb, inside and out, and can range from a single growth to multiple. For most women they give no cause for concern and grow unnoticed. But for others, the genetic disorder can mean heavy and painful periods and lead to fatigue and anaemia. In the worst cases, it can make conceiving more complicated, cause infertility and increase the risk of miscarriage. Common indications are pain heavy menstrual bleeding, pressure on or adjacent organs such as the bladder.

Medical treatment available:

- a) Tablets or injections to manipulate hormones that effect fibroid growth, however discontinuation of treatment will result in re-growth
- b) Myomectomy - surgical procedure that removes just the fibroid, not the entire uterus
- c) Hysterectomy - removal of the uterus

- d) Microwave Endometrial Ablation - gynaecologists remove fibroids via a probe
- e) Uterine Embolisation UAE - under local anaesthetic the arteries feeding the fibroids are blocked, this procedure does not remove them, they shrink and come away usually but not exclusively during menstruation. Follow up checks are given.

Conference, Black women suffer disproportionately from fibroids and are three to five times more likely to develop them than White women. Black women also tend to have larger, more numerous fibroids at diagnosis. Fibroids seem to occur at a younger age and grow more quickly in Black women as well. Fibroids are the reason behind 30 percent of hysterectomies in White women and over 50 percent of hysterectomies in Black women.

Those who are overweight, started puberty early, or have not had children, are also more likely to have fibroids. Dr On said: "Fibroids are non-fatal. They do not kill you so the medical community doesn't care much about them. They think hysterectomies can cure it so their job is done, but there are psychological side effects and many other side effects'

Common sense will tell you that unless you start collecting data and continuously revising your statistics, how do you know what the situation is? Does it make sense not to have research on a condition that is so poorly understood you don't even know the exact causes of it?

As Dr On pointed out, the most common form of treatment for fibroids is a hysterectomy, the removal of the womb. For women still hoping to conceive, they can undergo a myomectomy which removes the fibroids, but leaves the womb untouched. However, myomectomies have a high recurrence rate of about 75 percent meaning a life spent in and out of hospital.

Health disparities are not a new phenomenon, especially when it comes to level of health care and access to services that Black women receive. Why don't medical institutions seem to care about Black women's high rates of unnecessary hysterectomy?

Conference, fibroid embolisations – an alternative treatment widely, involves injecting grain-sized particles into the womb using small needles that cause the fibroids to dry up and shrink by 60 percent.

The recovery period is two weeks and does have a few side effects,

including abdominal pain and passing big blood clots, but it is a “small price to pay” for a treatment that has almost permanent results without going under the knife.

What is “really bad news from a cosmetic point of view” for African-Caribbean women, said Dr Walker, is that the cutting open of the body can lead to unsightly scarring because Black skin is likely to develop keloids. The procedure is available on the NHS so why don’t more GPs recommend embolisations or, at least, brief patients on all the options? “There is a problem in this country and that problem is lack of information. GPs claim not to know anything about embolisations, even though the knowledge is readily available and has been published in all the medical journals,” said Dr Walker who has been carrying out the procedure since 1996.

Conference therefore calls on the NBMC to work with:

- 1) The National Women’s Committee to produce information leaflets on fibroids that highlight the alternative treatment options;
- 2) Community based and health organisations to raise the issue of fibroids amongst Black women, develop treatment initiatives and highlight the alternatives to hysterectomies;
- 3) Work with the health service group on seeking to influence Clinical Commissioning Groups and Public Health England on this issue.

**Submitted by: National Black Members' Committee**  
**NBMC Policy: Support**

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## **8. HIDDEN DISABILITIES**

Conference notes with concern the issues faced by our Black members living with long term conditions and hidden disabilities such as Systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) more common in Black women, Sarcoidosis and Sickle cell. The fact that these conditions are not obvious can cause members to have their complaints for sick leave and requests for support to their employers treated with disdain and suspicion. This can result in victimisation and bullying at work, a refusal to grant time off required to manage the condition and a likelihood that the time off required will be usually recorded as sick leave rather than disability leave.

Scofield et al (2008) describe Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE) as a 'chronic autoimmune rheumatic disease which places a significant burden on the individuals affected and their family members'. Either as a consequence of the disease or of the treatments used for it, irreversible damage involving neuropsychiatric, renal, cardiovascular, and many other systems can occur. Additionally, patients often experience long-term morbidity that can adversely affect their quality of life and ability to work, resulting in substantial direct and indirect costs to the individual.

Common symptoms of SLE include:

- a) Arthritis
- b) Rheumatism
- c) Joint pain and stiffness, which is often accompanied by swelling and redness
- d) Skin rash, including the characteristic "butterfly rash" on the face that extends over the bridge of the nose and cheeks
- e) Sjorens syndrome
- f) Raynauds phenomenon
- g) Fever
- h) Extreme fatigue
- i) Weight loss
- j) Loss of appetite, nausea, and weight loss
- k) Chest pain

Symptoms which largely go unnoticed and are hidden.

Members with conditions such as these have reported that they have been accused of 'being lazy' and 'sleeping on the job' (a manifestation of chronic fatigue) and received comments from employers and work colleagues which reflect disbelief such as 'I can't see anything wrong with you' when the sufferer may be in severe pain in every joint of their body. Often, accusations are made as to the necessity of their disability aids and requirement to take time off or vary their working hours. Members are often mismanaged through this process as managers demonstrate a lack of knowledge and skill in dealing with such a

condition that is subject to 'flare-ups', (times when the condition is at its height and carries a majority of symptoms) this ultimately results in members being put on poor performance measures and disciplinary procedures. Many members complain about the isolation they experience at work as people discuss them and their conditions. The culmination of continuous treatment, enquiry and questioning results in stress, stress that only serves to exacerbate the existing conditions.

Conference, we know that it is against the law for employers to discriminate against you because of your disability. Further the Equality Act 2010 offers protection and extends to putting an obligation on employers to make reasonable adjustments in the workplace to avoid disabled workers being disadvantaged. However, many Black workers will be unaware of their rights and may not seek the proper advice because of the isolation that they feel.

Conference, people are losing their jobs, giving up when they cannot take it anymore or are managed out of the workplace as unable to perform their duties. There is no need for this to continue. Conference, we must do something to immediately address this situation which victimises and punishes our Black members for something over which they have no control.

Conference asks that the National Black Members' Committee:

- 1) Work to raise awareness of these conditions which predominantly affect Black people;
- 2) Create documentation which can be placed on the UNISON website and in relevant UNISON journals as to the manifestation and symptoms of the condition;
- 3) Research members' experience in gaining time off to assist them in the treatment of their conditions;
- 4) Work with the National Disabled Members Committee to seek to establish how UNISON can best support such members in the workplace and make them aware of their rights.

**Submitted by: National Black Members' Committee**  
**NBMC Policy: Support**

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## 9. BLACK WELL BEING

Conference austerity is having a severe and negative effect not just on the pocket but also on the health and well being of UK citizens, especially Black people within their communities.

With research showing an increase in job losses for Black members through reorganisations and restructures and some of these situations leading to an increase in mental health problems, depression and a sense of despair, as long term unemployment takes its toll on our members.

It is time for forward thinking investment to enable access to support, in obtaining real employment and not short term zero hour contracts, which have no realistic opportunity to workers to remain in secure long term employment. Contracts which continues to ensure a downward spiral into poverty, one of the key routes of depression and mental health problems.

Conference calls on the NBMC to continue to work with the NEC to:

- 1) Produce information on the impact of health and well being at work through publication of organisations that support Black communities;
- 2) Update via Black Action and other UNISON communication on the work of effective occupational health services to keep workers in work and help them to return to work as soon as possible;
- 3) Highlight the impact of austerity measures on Black employees via the Freedom Of Information Research undertaken by UNISON.

**Submitted by:** *Greater London Region*  
**NBMC Policy:** *Support*

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## 10. BLACK WELL BEING

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With research showing an increase in job losses for Black members through reorganisations and restructures and in some of these situations leading to an increase in mental health problems, depression and a

sense of despair as long term unemployment takes its toll.

It is time for forward thinking investment to enable access to support in obtaining real employment and not short term zero hour contracts which have no realistic opportunity to workers to remain in secure long term employment which continues to ensure a downward spiral into poverty one of the key routes of depression and mental health problems.

Conference calls on the NMBC to continue work with the NEC to:

- 1) Produce information on the impact of health and well being at work through publication of organisations that support Black communities;
- 2) Update via Black Action and other UNISON communication on the work of effective occupational health services to keep workers in work and help them return to work as soon as possible.

**Submitted by: Hammersmith & Fulham**

**NBMC Policy: Support**

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## **11. CARE WORKERS – PROMOTE THE NEED TO RECORD VIOLENT INCIDENTS**

There is a high proportion of Black workers in the care and support sector. Black workers disproportionately face job losses, downgrading and cuts in hours.

In addition to this, care workers working with individuals with learning difficulties and dementia are at a higher risk of suffering from violence and abuse at work. Some of whom find it very difficult to report these incidents for fear of losing their jobs.

In a survey by Skills for Care on support workers in 2013 it found that under reporting was a major issue. Black staff are continually given the impression that suffering abuse is simply part of the job. Under reporting is a real issue due to their lack of awareness of organisations policies and procedures and fear of losing of their job.

In 2013 Unison survey of healthcare assistants found that 85% of the participants were verbally abused whilst 20% had been exposed to actual physical violence at work. Many of those interviewed were thinking of leaving the profession as they felt that their jobs were neither appreciated nor respected by those in authority.

We therefore call on the National Black Members Committee to work with the NEC to:

- 1) Explore and discuss how we can encourage Black members to routinely report issues of abuse.
- 2) Explore increasing training for members on the issue of violence at work and how to combat this.
- 3) Develop a campaign highlighting the violence at work and how to combat this issue.

**Submitted by:** *Greater London Region*  
**NBMC Policy:** *Support*

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## **12. MOTION ON EQUALITY FACILITY TIME FOR BLACK MEMBERS**

At the Discrimination Law Conference in January 2014 Professor Sir Bob Hepple QC said that “if a new government enacts only one new piece of equality legislation it should be to require equality representatives at workplaces” – such reps would require a legal right to time off to “be involved in drawing up and enforcing employment and pay equity plans”.

Currently Black Members’ Officers, have no legal right to time off to undertake their trade union equality duties. The TUC argued in a 2005 that trade union equality reps should be given the same statutory rights as learning reps – paid time off for training and for undertaking their role. Training included developing the necessary knowledge, skills and confidence to undertake the role effectively and capacity building for effective engagement with employers. Black Members Officers should be able to get time off to undertaken this training and development but many are struggling to get the necessary time off.

TUC research published in 2010 concluded that a key factor in equality reps effectiveness was the amount of time they were able to spend on their duties and without a statutory right that time was limited. The research reported that equality reps greatly enhance employers’ equality work and have a positive impact in the workplace. There was evidence of employers support with one saying “It is in our interests to develop competent equality reps.”

The TUC research also found that 'equality reps are more likely than other union reps to be from an ethnic minority' suggesting that the role can attract Black trade union members into activity. The concern is that the difficulties of obtaining time off to train for, and undertake the role, act as a disincentive to this.

This matter is especially important for UNISON given that a significant proportion of our members are Black people. The lack of equality facility time is therefore directly discriminatory and is also indirectly discriminatory in that Black women's time is heavily pressurised due to caring responsibilities.

Four years of the coalition government and its austerity policies have significantly increased workplace inequality and concerns about racial discrimination. The lack of equalities facility time seriously impairs Black activist's abilities to challenge discrimination against Black workers in the workplace – it is becoming a 2nd class matter for better days. The implicit – if not explicit – perception is that race equality is not as important as other TU issues.

Now more than ever race equality should be centre stage. The inequitable effects of the austerity policies need tackling:

- a) How zero hour contracts affect Black workers;
- b) Segregation of Black workers into low pay jobs and the need for a living wage;
- c) Employer sickness absence monitoring resulting in 'survival of the fittest';

and the particular impact on Black workers:

- d) Effect of the increase in stress and mental ill health on Black workers;
- e) Disproportionate redundancies affecting Black workers.

Conference requests the National Black Members Committee to:

- 1) Discuss facility time for Black Members officers with the TUC with a view to raising it with the next government;
- 2) Work with Labour Link to influence the next labour Government to extend facility time to Black Members Officers.

**Submitted by: East Midlands Region**  
**NBMC Policy: Support**

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### **13. MAKING SENSE OF DIGNITY IN THE WORK PLACE FOR BLACK WORKERS**

Conference notes that many employers have in place Dignity at Work or Anti Bullying and Harassment policies. These policies are intended to allow all employees to work in a respectful and dignified environment where we can and should feel valued and respected. Many local authorities have put in place a Dignity at Work policy which will state that as an employer they will treat all employees with dignity and respect.

Unfortunately, there are too many times when we know Black workers have expressed regular experiences of undignified and unfair treatment in the workplace. Where they, as Black workers, continue to experience on a daily basis, disrespect, condescension, ridicule, and are treated with little or no dignity at all. Many of us have supported Black members who have experienced this behaviour in the work place.

Dignity in the work place policies have sometimes failed to work for Black workers and undermine Black workers capability, leaving them feeling humiliated, intimidated and undervalued. Being made to feel that your contribution as a team member is less important than your white colleagues on a regular basis can result in:

- a) Poor morale
- b) Loss of confidence and low self esteem
- c) Poor performance
- d) Isolation
- e) Increased sickness absence or resignation

Conference, neither of us expects unconditional and spontaneous friendship from our colleagues and managers, but what we do expect is to be treated with dignity and respect and to be free from harassment, subtle avoidance and other discriminatory practices.

We instruct the National Black Members Committee to undertake the following:

- 1) An audit of existing Dignity at Work, Anti Bullying and Harassment policies used by employers from a variety of sectors and parts of the UK;
- 2) To produce a draft policy document which includes a 'what works best' Dignity at Work and Anti Bullying and Harassment policy for Black Workers so that this document can act as a template in supporting Black Workers in the workplace;
- 3) That this policy is sent out to all branch Black members groups and Regional Black Members Committees for consultation with a deadline for responses back;
- 4) That responses from Branch and Regional level are then incorporated into a final document which could be entitled 'How to support Black Members better in the workplace, Addressing Dignity at Work issues';
- 5) That this document could include guidance notes as to how Collective Bargaining, Equality issues, Negotiation and Support of Black Workers can be improved within the workplace.

**Submitted by: Newcastle City**

**NBMC Policy: Support**

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## **Campaigning**

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### **14. BLACK LGBT ASYLUM SEEKERS**

Conferences is concerned to hear that homosexuality is criminalised in 76 countries in the world, including 40 African countries, and society persecutes and discriminates against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Trans (LGBT) people in even more countries.

In July 2011 it was reported that the Commonwealth Secretary General, Kamalesh Sharma had spoken out against discrimination towards people who were gay or lesbian while on a visit to Australia, arguing that "vilification and targeting on grounds of sexual orientation are at odds with the values of the Commonwealth". Despite this statement, homosexuality remains criminalised in 49 out of 53 commonwealth countries. This means that persecution of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Asylum seekers is not only a LGBT issue but is a

Black issue.

Conference notes that the North West Regional LGBT Group has heard from a Nigerian lesbian human rights activist, Aderonke, who now lives in their region. Aderonke has spoken of the appalling conditions she experienced during her detention in Yarl's Wood and the inhumane things that she had to go through in order to prove to the authorities that she is a lesbian and therefore at risk (her life will be in danger) if (she was) returned to Nigeria.

Conference further notes that the UNISON-sponsored report by the United Kingdom Lesbian and Gay Immigration Group (UKLGIG) "Missing the Mark; Decision Making on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex (LGBTI) Asylum Claims?" published in September 2013, highlights that 98–99 per cent of LGBTI asylum seekers are initially rejected; yet 30 per cent are approved on appeal.

The report revealed:

- a) Inappropriate and sexually explicit questioning by case workers;
- b) Disbelieving a person is lesbian or gay due to the decision maker's misconceptions about sexual identity;
- c) Falsely assuming that internal relocation is a valid option and that it is possible to live as a lesbian or gay man in countries where homophobia is prevalent "as long as someone is not ostentatious about it";
- d) Stereotyped assumptions about female sexuality and about lesbian and gay relationships;
- e) Use of out dated Country of Origin Information or ill-informed sources such as the Spartacus Guide.
- f) The continuing invisibility of lesbian asylum seekers and failure to recognise the intersectional factors based on both gender and sexual orientation which affect their lives and their claims.

Conference welcomes the review in the area of sexual orientation and gender identity asylum claims announced by the Government on 28 March 2014. However, Conference is concerned that Black asylum seekers, having escaped persecution in their own country are doubly disadvantaged when faced by a hostile UK immigration system.

Conference calls upon the National Black Members' Committee to:

- 1) Publicise and promote the recommendations of the Making the Mark Report and encourage regional LGBT and Black members groups to do the same;
- 2) Work with Labour Link, BAME Labour and LGBT Labour to raise the relevant recommendations with Labour; and;
- 3) Encourage joint work between regional and branch LGBT and Black members groups to support, publicise and promote the work of UKLGIG;
- 4) Consider hosting a fringe meeting at the 2016 National Black Members Conference highlighting the experiences of LGBT asylum seekers in the UK.

**Submitted by: National Black Members' Committee**  
**NBMC Policy: Support**

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## **15. ROTHERHAM**

Conference is appalled at the cases of grooming and sexual abuse in Rotherham. While we do not know the true scale the independent enquiry into Child sexual exploitation in Rotherham led by Alexis Jay gives a conservative estimate involving approximately 1400 children, adding: "It is hard to describe the appalling nature of the abuse that child victims suffered." Conference believes that perpetrators of child abuse must not be protected by the kind of denial and silence that has so long allowed victims to suffer alone. As historic cases of child abuse within the UK continue to be uncovered, Conference believes that preventing such cases in the future must be the highest priority.

The reporting of the sexual abuse within Rotherham has been racialised within the media to the extent that disturbing issues of women and children not being believed or supported have become an all too common thread linking many recent cases. Nazir Afzal, the Crown Prosecution Services lead on child sexual abuse and violence against women and girls explained that 'it is not the abusers' race that defines them. It is their attitude to women'. Conference believes that at the root of this problem is misogyny.

Conference draws attention to an in-depth report by the Children's Commissioner on grooming, abuse and gangs which highlights the fact that the vast majority of the victims were young vulnerable women and

that of the perpetrators, 72% were male, 10% were female and 18% were undisclosed. The majority of the perpetrators were white with Black perpetrators the second largest category. 28% of the victims were from Black backgrounds themselves.

Conference believes that racialising the problem of sexual abuse means that victims and perpetrators that do not fit the perceived model will continue to be overlooked. Furthermore, the EDL and other far right groups have hijacked the personal tragedy of the victims turning concerns into attacks on race and religion. A whole community are now under siege.

We must not allow these horrendous crimes to be used as political capital. The far right offers no answer to the problems or protections for the people who have been abused. We must not allow hate to divide our communities and the next general election must be used to ensure that the far right do not maintain a presence in Rotherham.

Conference believes that tackling sexual abuse, no matter who the perpetrator or who the victim is should be our highest priority in safeguarding vulnerable people. This also means addressing issues of sexual violence being experienced by young Black women who will now feel more isolated than ever before.

Conference, we call upon the National Black members committee to:

- 1) Work with the Labour Link in mobilising the local vote in Rotherham
- 2) Work with Hope not hate and other community organisations to address issues of racism and anti-muslim hate so that the far right groups cannot continue to exploit this horrific issue for their gain
- 3) Continue to campaign against austerity and cuts which saw money taken away from services to protect vulnerable people
- 4) To work with community based organisations to challenge immigration myths and campaign to highlight the positive contributions of both migrant and Muslim communities to Britain

**Submitted by: National Black Members' Committee**  
**NBMC Policy: Support**

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## **16. POLITICS AND BLACK COMMUNITIES**

Black communities must reject the economic policies of the coalition government. Austerity cuts continue to significantly impact on Black people and we cannot sit back and see our basic human rights eroded due to the colour of our skin.

Conference, too often the colour of your skin determines your life chances and Black communities continue to experience poorer outcomes in key areas such as education and health. The Black vote must be used as a force to demand that the government addresses persistent race inequality across the UK.

Never has it been more important for Black people and their communities to understand the importance of their political voice and participation over the next coming months leading up to the General election in 2015 and beyond.

The government introduced a new system of registering to vote that has moved the responsibility from the household to individuals aged 18 and over. Simon Woolley, Operation Black Vote fears this could have a 'devastating effect' on turnout. According to a recent Electoral Commission poll, only 48% of Black voters were aware of these changes significantly fewer than the number of white people who were.

In 2010, 7% of white British people were not registered to vote and this was significantly lower than most Black communities.

Age is also a factor that influences voter turnout, all young people are less likely to vote and Black populations tend to be younger on average than white people. In considering some of the changes we have seen in policy and in our community since the coalition government has been in office that affect young people Black including:

- a) Black youth unemployment rising by 56%;
- b) The removal of the Education Maintenance Allowance;
- c) University fees tripled;
- d) Sure Start centre closures;
- e) Increased levels of Stop and Search.

It is clear to see why young Black people do not feel they have a voice

and that this government is not concerned with the disproportionate negative impact current policies are having on Black people.

With UKIP and other far right groups continuing to promote their propaganda about immigration, we must organise to ensure the Black vote helps to decide who governs these shores for the next 4 to 5 years and rid ourselves of these vile and reprehensible people. In this climate of austerity and cuts Black people are easy scapegoats for such groups to blame for the lack of jobs, poor housing and poverty.

Recent research by Operation Black Vote has revealed that an organised Black vote could significantly influence the outcome of the next general elections. Further the changing demographic across the UK coupled with a growing Black population that now represents 8% of the overall electorate in England and Wales presents Black people with a real opportunity to heavily influence change.

Many believe that the disengagement of Black people in politics is rooted in parliament neither looking nor sounding representative and inclusive. Despite the Census showing an increase in the Black population in the UK the diversity of MP's and councillors remains disproportionate. In 2010 only 4% of local councillors were Black. We have to organise, become politically aware and active to affect change in our lives.

We therefore call on the National Black Members' Committee to continue to work with the National Executive Committee and Labour Link to:

- 1) Continue to campaign on issues that unfairly disadvantage Black communities and challenge the undermining of equality legislation set to protect Black people from discrimination;
- 2) Ensure Labour party policies reflect the issues facing young Black people;
- 3) Continue to campaign and work with other relevant organisations and the young members forum to encourage Black members to vote in the next General Election in 2015 and become an active political voice within UNISON;
- 4) Receive an update on the political education campaign and the challenge to the anti-immigration debate;
- 5) Develop and promote opportunities for Black members to become politically active by becoming MPs and councillors.

**Submitted by: National Black Members' Committee**  
**NBMC Policy: Support**

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## **17. UNDERSTANDING UKIP'S DAMAGING POLICIES**

Conference notes with concern the rise in support for UKIP, especially in the lead up to the 2014 Local and European Elections, the Newark by-election and now in the lead up to the 2015 General Election.

Conference we have all heard UKIP's hostile immigration, xenophobic, racist, sexist, homophobic and Islamophobic views.

We further note that in the 2010 General Election UKIP proposed to 'freeze' public sector pensions and end statutory maternity and paternity pay and leave as well as 'scrap' most 'equality and anti-discrimination legislation'. Despite claiming extremist views have been excluded from the party, the UKIP leader continues to attack women's role in the workplace – stating that women with children are worthless to employers.

Conference you will be alarmed to hear that some of our members voted for UKIP in the 2014 Local and European Elections and are considering voting for them in the 2015 General Election.

The NBMC feel that with appropriate education and understanding of what UKIP stands for we can alert members not to vote for UKIP.

Conference we therefore call on the NBMC to:

- 1) Work with the NEC to provide appropriate material highlighting UKIP policies;
- 2) Continue to work with other Self Organising Groups, National Labour Link Committee, NEC, and other relevant bodies such as Hope not Hate to raise awareness of UKIP policies and organise mass campaigns against them;
- 3) Work with the National Labour Link Committee and Learning and Organising (LAOS) to provide political education at all levels of the union (branch, regional and national);
- 4) Recommend that Race Awareness and Anti-Fascism Group debates are held at Branch, regional and national levels to address extreme and discriminatory views

## **18. YOUNG BLACK PEOPLE IN CARE**

Conference notes the research commissioned by the Rowntree Foundation (Black Youth on the Margins, Ravinder Barn) published in 2001.

This report noted that about 50,000 children and young people were looked after by local authorities in England in 2000. However there was no ethnic monitoring of those young people at this point.

However in a study of 6 local authorities, the number of Black children were over represented in referrals for physical abuse compared to white children (58% vs 42%) and under represented in referrals for sexual abuse (20% vs 31%).

Previous research shows that young Black people are over represented in the care system. Once these young people are in the care system, they are less likely to be found suitable family placements. There is a shortage of Black and Asian foster carers and these carers have been given inadequate support in the past. Black children are more likely to be placed with white families but when they are placed with families with a similar background, the children tend to be older and have spent longer in the care system.

There has been very little UK research on young lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in the care system and how this affects Black LGBT young people. However, we know from anecdotal evidence that Black LGBT young people face particular issues.

There have also been few schemes to support and encourage LGBT people and families to become foster carers and adoptive parents targeting Black LGBT families.

Conference calls on the National Black Members' Committee to:

- 1) Liaise with the higher education service group executive and national LGBT committee to consider options for conducting some UK specific research on the experiences of young Black LGBT people in care;
- 2) Encourage regions and branches to work to provide role models for young Black LGBT people in care across all our service groups;

- 3) Work with regions and branches to encourage Black members to consider becoming foster carers, adoptive parents or join befriending services;
- 4) Consider having a fringe meeting or speaker at 2016 Black Members' Conference to discuss outreach schemes and support for Black and LGBT foster parents/carers.

**Submitted by:** *National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee*

**NBMC Policy:** *Support*

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## **19. REMEMBERING THE BRISTOL BUS BOYCOTT**

Conference notes that it has been over 50 years since the Bristol bus boycott in 1963. Paul Stephenson was the spokesman for the group who wished to highlight the colour bar for Black workers to be employed as conductors and drivers on Bristol buses.

This boycott was credited in leading to the Race Relations Act being passed in 1965.

Conference calls on the National Black Members' Committee:

- 1) To highlight in all appropriate publications, including Black Action, the influence on trade union history by Black activists;
- 2) To consider an event for Black History month covering the role Black activists have played in trade union history.

**Submitted by:** *Eastern Region*

**NBMC Policy:** *Support*

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## **20. DISMANTLING THE WELFARE STATE – IMPACT ON BLACK COMMUNITIES**

This Conference recognises that we are all aware of the impact that the vast changes to the Welfare State have had on our friends, families and communities.

A Coalition government determined to bring down the countries deficit and determined to make the poorest and most vulnerable pay, despite

the fact that the lack of financial regulations and the reckless gambling of the banks caused our economy to fail.

Part of their measures of cuts, slash and burn has been to squeeze the very heart of British Society, The Welfare State. A system put into place after the war, to support the most vulnerable of our society and assist them in the times of need.

The coalition government has introduced a package of measures intended to reduce the increasing cost of Housing Benefit (HB). The Race Equality Foundation has published research on Black communities through 'Better Housing' that examines the impact of these cuts. Living in areas targeted by the cuts, Black communities are likely to experience higher child poverty rates and need larger accommodation due to family size. Furthermore, although some of the reductions in housing benefit do not apply to claimants with disabilities, there is evidence to suggest that Black disabled people are less likely to claim the benefits to which they are entitled.

The key facts the report has found include:

- a) The reduction and capping of Local Housing Allowance will impact disproportionately on Black ethnic communities as many live in areas targeted by the cuts and will often need larger accommodation due to family size;
- b) Child poverty rates for Black families in the UK are higher than the national average and the Housing Benefit cuts are likely to increase this disparity;
- c) Increased conditionality for working-age claimants is more likely to impact on Black claimants as they are disproportionately represented among workless households;
- d) Some of the reductions in Housing Benefit do not apply to claimants with disabilities; however, Black claimants are less likely to claim the benefits that provide this protection.

Conference notes that a cross party committee set up by the government to look into the shocking increase in food banks released the following figures; costs have increased at a greater rate than earnings since 2003, with food up by 46.4% and fuel up by 154%, significantly more than earnings, which have risen by 27.9% and overall inflation (up 37.5%).

The number of families accessing food banks and needing emergency food packages has grown alarmingly in the last three years. The Trussell Trust Group, who provide emergency food packages to people in crisis across the country have produced the following statistics:-

2011 – 2012 128,697 people were provided with 3 days emergency food

2012 – 2013 346,992 people were provided with 3 days emergency food

2013 – 2014 913,138 people were provided with 3 days emergency food

The main reason for this alarming increase is the changes to the benefits system with cuts to allowances and delays in payments.

As a country, we simply cannot continue. As a Trade Union we should be defending the Welfare State and highlighting this gross unfairness to our work colleagues; friends and community.

Therefore in light of the above statistics Conference calls upon the NBMC to:

- 1) Work with sympathetic organisations to gather statistical information on how the changes to the Welfare State have impacted Black Communities across the country;
- 2) Identify the priority key areas of concern to Black Members;
- 3) Work with the Labour Link Committee to raise these priorities with the Labour Party, so that they can be considered in manifestos;
- 4) Produce the research for branches to distribute and discuss in workplace meetings and publish in Black Action.

**Submitted by: Greater London Region**  
**NBMC Policy: Support**

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## **21. BLACK PEOPLE AND MENTAL HEALTH**

Physical and mental well-being cannot be taken for granted, especially in today's climate of an ever increasing workload, job cuts, austerity measures in services and service providers, the threat of redundancy

and the pressure for some securing and sustaining employment, workplace stress, are some of the factors many people are now trying to deal with. Mental Health can affect anyone, sadly the fact is, everyone will know of someone who has mental health issues, or is related to someone with mental health problems, or has a work colleague who is, or has been suffering mental health problems. Often mental health sufferers are frightened or reluctant to seek help because of fear, repercussions in the workplace, fear of the treatment provided or the stigma that surrounds it. Mental health is an illness that is often miss - understood, miss diagnosed, miss treated and stigmatized.

The Mental Health Foundation studies has reported “In general , people from Black and minority ethnic groups living in the UK , are more likely to be diagnosed with mental health problems, be admitted to hospital, disengage from mainstream mental health services, leading to social exclusion and further mental health deterioration “. Mental health is similar to other illness, in which there are various stages and severities, the Mental Health Foundation suggests “mixed anxiety and depression is the most common mental disorder in Britain”. Also “African Caribbean people are three to five times more likely than any other group to be diagnosed and admitted to hospital for schizophrenia”.

Black Mental Health UK (BMH UK), is an organisation that has been set up to address the aberrant “inequalities in the treatment and care of people from African Caribbean communities” where there is an “over representation of Black people at the coercive end of psychiatric care” and To “inform these communities on how to influence the strategic development, policy design and implementation of service”

It has been reported in the Birmingham Evening Mail on the 15th September 2014, that the murder of a schoolgirl on her way to school on a Birmingham bus in March 2013, could have been avoided. A 25 year old Black male with a 10 year history of paranoid schizophrenic, has now been detained indefinitely under the Mental Health Act. How many more lives will be affected by mental health, raising awareness is only the beginning.

Therefore conference calls upon the NBMC:

- 1) To work with Black Mental Health UK to encourage and raise awareness about their work so that UNISON members may be encouraged to get involved;
- 2) To liaise with UNISON welfare “There for You”

3) An updated article in Black Action about the work of Black Mental Health UK and other Black Mental health organizations.

**Submitted by:** *West Midlands Region*

**NBMC Policy:** *Support*

### **Amendment 21.1**

Insert new paragraph three after 'hospital for schizophrenia'.' and before 'Black Mental Health UK':

'Conference notes that isolation at work can place Black lesbian gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) people at increased risk of mental ill-health. However, being Black and LGBT with mental ill-health is particularly detrimental as many services do not recognise the complexities of multiple identities. Misconceptions due to assumptions around sexual orientation and gender identity do little to encourage Black disabled LGBT people to seek assistance or access the information they need. This was highlighted in the research undertaken by Stonewall and the Runnymede Trust, published in their 2012 report "One Minority at a Time". It is disappointing that the views of Black transgender people were not included in their research. Some services that did exist to meet the mental health needs of Black disabled LGBT members have lost funding due to the austerity measures of this government. The NatCen research Report "Implications of austerity for LGBT people and services" shows the impact that the loss of targeted services can have.'

**Submitted by:** *National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee*

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## **22. BLACK COMMUNITIES AND THE GENERAL ELECTIONS 2015**

With the General Election less than 3 months away, never has it been more important for Black people and their communities to understand the importance of their political voice and participation over the next coming months and years.

“Just because you do not take an interest in politics, does not mean that politics won’t take an interest in you”.

With most major UK Political party signing up to the same spending

plans and promising further austerity after the 2015 General Election. Labour has to listen to the voice of the people. It is up to the Trade Unions to resist these failed policies that are disproportionately hitting Black people, women, disabled and LGBT working class communities.

The programme of cuts and privatisations affecting the NHS, schools, social security, employment law and public services across the UK is co-ordinated and systematic attacks that will be continue to get worse if we do not have a change of government in 2015.

Black workers, people and their communities have a vital and integral part to play in the political arena and their vote has to count in the selection of the next prime minister and government, they must not fail to act.

Black people reject the economic policies of the coalition government, as the austerity cuts are impacting on them significantly and we cannot sit back and see our basic human rights eroded due to the colour of your skin.

Still too often the colour of your skin determines your life outcomes, but the Black vote must be used as a force to demand that the government addresses persistent race inequality across the UK.

With UKIP and other Far Right Groups ceasing to promote their propaganda about immigration we must organise to ensure the Black vote helps to decide who governs these shores for the next 4 to 5 years and rid ourselves of these vile and senseless people.

We therefore call on the NBMC to continue to work with the NEC and Labour Link to:

- 1) Continue to campaign on issues that unfairly disadvantage Black communities and challenge the undermining of equalities in the UK government;
- 2) Continue to campaign to encourage Black members to vote in the General Election in 2015;
- 3) Receive an update on the political education campaign and the challenge to the anti-immigration debate;
- 4) Continue to promote the contributions of migrant communities to the UK.

**Submitted by: Greater London Region**  
**NBMC Policy: Support**

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### **23. MOBILISING THE BLACK VOTE**

Conference notes that on 7 May 2015 a new government will be elected in Westminster. Whatever its political make-up, there will be repercussions for Black communities

Many Black workers, particularly disabled, LGBT and low paid Black workers, don't vote because they don't believe it will change anything. Some have cast their votes for the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) despite their policies of reducing taxes for the rich and selling off the National Health Service (NHS). Conference is concerned that government plans to introduce individual electoral registration (IER) and end the legal requirement to register to vote will have a further detrimental effect on turn-out and efforts to defeat the far right electorally.

Recent research by Operation Black Vote shows that Black voters could be decisive in the 2015 general election. In England and Wales there are 168 constituencies where Black voters outnumber the majority held by the sitting MP.

For example, in North Warwickshire, the Conservative MP has a majority of 54 and there are 3381 Black voters. In Norwich South, the Liberal Democrats have a majority of 310 and there are 7066 Black voters.

The Conservative\Lib Dem government has pursued a range of policies that have savaged public services and attacked workers' rights resulting in:

- a) Tens of thousands of UNISON members losing their job;
- b) cuts in pay, terms and conditions of employment;
- c) attacks in trade union rights and facilities agreement;
- d) dilution of regulations protecting TUPE transferred workers;
- e) introduction of employment tribunal fees;
- f) reduction of public services provided to Black communities.

The government has also attacked equality provisions, including:

- g) cutting compensation payments for workplace discrimination;
- h) attempting to scrap the Equality Act;
- i) watering down the equality duty;
- j) slashing the budget of the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

The record of the last Labour government was not perfect. However, it implemented legislation which had a significantly positive impact on Black communities including the minimum wage, proactive equality laws, equal employment rights for part time workers and a large increase in public spending on health and education.

Under the current electoral system, the only political party that can stop the Conservatives, Lib Dems and UKIP is Labour. However the votes of Black members should not be taken for granted. Black members in UNISON should set out expectations for the next Labour government. These expectations need to reverse the injustices of the ConDems and set out practical solutions to better the livelihoods of Black people.

Conference instructs the National Black Members Committee to:

- 1) Request that the NEC engages with political parties to ensure that race equality issues and the needs of Black communities are considered in all policies;
- 2) Take immediate action to urge all UNISON Black members to ensure they are registered to vote;
- 3) Advise members why the election of a Labour government in 2015 will be the best result for Black UNISON members;
- 4) Continue to work with UNISON Labour Link on a programme aimed at increasing the number of Black Labour candidates in local, national and European elections.

**Submitted by: Eastern Region**  
**NBMC Policy: Support**

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## **24. CONSOLIDATING ANTI-RACISM WORK WITHIN THE UNION**

UNISON's long-standing campaigns on equality, human rights and anti-racism make us an attractive and welcoming union for Black members and for migrant workers. As a result we have a large and growing Black and migrant workers membership and strong self organised groups for Black members.

However, racism remains ever present in society. In Northern Ireland, the last 12 months have been marked by a flurry of racist attacks and incendiary racist comments from our political leaders. Headlines, placards and bonfires proclaiming "Local homes for local people"; "I wouldn't trust a Muslim"; or "we are not racist we just don't like n\*\*\*\*" on 11th July bonfires have become more prominent and Black people continue to suffer daily insults and frightening attacks in the shadows.

Given our proud history, UNISON are ideally place to play our part in challenging racism both in society, in our workplaces and within our own movement. We must ensure that UNISON itself remains a Racism free zone. Our Black Members must know that they can rely on all their stewards and branch officers to challenge racist comments and racist banter in the workplace.

Conference calls on the National Black Members Committee:

- 1) to enforce a zero tolerance approach to racism within our own structures;
- 2) to ensure that this 'zero tolerance' message is made clear to all existing activists and becomes part of the induction of all new stewards;
- 3) to work with branches to ensure they all have fully trained equality officers and/or anti racism champions in their branches.

**Submitted by: UNISON Northern Ireland**  
**NBMC Policy: Support**

### **Amendment 24.1**

Insert new paragraph four after 'comments and racist banter in the workplace.' and before 'Conference calls on the':

'The union has an anti-discrimination policy. It means the union seeks to ensure that discriminatory acts are not committed against any person by the union or by its organs, members, or officers on grounds such as race, gender, sexuality, gender identity, disability, age, creed or social class. Achieving equality is central to our unions aims and objectives.'

In action point 1) before 'to enforce', insert 'To continue'.

**Submitted by: National Black Members' Committee**

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## **25. RISE OF RACISM IN THE UK**

Conference, a recent study commissioned by NatCen, an organisation which looks into British Social Attitudes has overwhelmingly established that racism is on the rise.

While thirty per cent of Britons described themselves as having “very or a little prejudice against people of other races”, the survey also outlined that attitudes have changed since the 1980’s and throughout the 1990’s. This change in attitudes is very worrying, because the study has revealed that during the aforementioned periods racism was at its highest at 38% and its lowest 25% in 2001.

The survey is implying that the sudden shift in the trend could be down to or fuelled by the events of 9/11 (2001).

It also outlined what it deemed to be least likely and most likely areas of increased racism being inner London, showing a low of 16% and the West Midlands a high of 35%. The survey also highlighted that the figures rose with 25% of 17 - 34 year olds describing themselves as racially prejudiced compared to 36% of over 55’s.

The survey also went on to state that 90% of interviewees admitted to some level of racism, indicated that it was linked to what was perceived to be the high level of immigration and they would like to see less immigration. This element was also reflected in individuals concerns about immigration in their area.

Conference therefore calls on the NBMC to work with the NEC:

- 1) To campaign with other trade unions to highlight the positive contributions of immigration;

- 2) To produce and distribute literature to branches and regions highlighting the positive contributions of immigration and migrant workers;
- 3) To work with Labour Link for political support from the Labour party in tackling the rise of racism in the UK;
- 4) To work with community based organisations to challenge immigration myths and highlight the positive contributions of migrant communities.

**Submitted by:** *Yorkshire & Humberside Region*  
**NBMC Policy:** *Support*

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## **26. JOINT ENTERPRISE LAW: NOT GUILTY BY ASSOCIATION**

The legal doctrine of “joint enterprise” or “common design” imposes criminal liability on all the participants in a criminal activity for all the consequences of that activity. This doctrine has formed part of the UK criminal law for over 300 years but was rarely used until the start of the 21st century. In the last 10-15 years, the police and the Crown Prosecution Service have used it with increasing enthusiasm, to convict all of those present at the scene of a serious crime (usually murder) regardless of whether they were of any plans for the crime to be committed.

All those convicted under joint enterprise law are held to be guilty of the main offence. Someone who stands at the back of the crowd while another person on the other side murders someone else, can be given a life sentence just like the killer. The jury has to be persuaded that by being with the crowd, that person gave encouragement to the killer’s actions. Indeed people can have left the area before the crime is committed and still be found guilty.

The joint enterprise doctrine was not created by elected MPs in Parliament passing legislation. It was created by judges whose rulings and advice are cited by other judges in future cases. Judges alone are responsible for deciding the types and standards of evidence they admit under this law. In 2012 the House of Commons Justice Select Committee stated “the lack of clarity..... on Joint Enterprise is unacceptable”.

Joint Enterprise: Not Guilty By Association (JENGBA) is a campaigning

organisation that aims to change the application of the law so that innocent people are not wrongly convicted on the basis of inadequate and misleading information. It also aims to overturn the convictions of innocent people wrongly convicted. 80% of the cases they support are from Black Communities.

Conference resolves that the National Black Members Committee should:

- 1) Send a letter of support to JENGBA;
- 2) Publicise the campaign through an article in Black Action;
- 3) Request that Labour Link raises the issue with UNISON linked MPs and peers.

**Submitted by:** *Eastern Region*  
**NBMC Policy:** *Support*

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## **27. NELSON MANDELA AWARD**

Conference each of us knows who Nelson Mandela was, we know of his achievements in setting his people free, his dignity in forgiving those who imprisoned him, we all remember the sadness at his passing just over a year ago.

Many members will be aware that Nelson was an honorary member of our great union, in his lifetime he received over 260 awards including the much coveted Nobel Peace Prize. In a celebration of a life so extraordinary, a life dedicated to helping Black people achieve equality, this motion proposes that we have a Nelson Mandela Award. As Nelson said 'what matters in life is not the mere fact that we have lived, it is the difference we have made to the life of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead'. This award would be presented to a Black member each year at this Conference; it would celebrate the achievements of the member. Amongst us there are many extraordinary people, heroes, people who have fought against the odds to become successful, people who have gone above and beyond to represent Black Members.

The award would not be limited to achievements inside Unison but it would encompass the achievements of a Black Member that embodies all that Nelson Mandela stood for, such as selflessness, courage and

determination.

Conference, as Black people we live and work in a society where achievements and awards are generally decided not by our peers but by privileged white people. This is our chance to celebrate what values and achievements we as Black people hold dear. Whoever wins the award will be a guest of the NBMC at Conference. It is time we celebrated the heroes amongst our own ranks.

This conference calls upon the NBMC to work with the NEC to:

- 1) Set up a Nelson Mandela Award that embodies his attributes and becomes an annual feature of the Black Members Conference from 2016 onwards
- 2) Publicise this award in Unison publications and online
- 3) Receive and evaluate the nominations and determine a winner
- 4) Announce the winner at 2016 National Black Members Conference
- 5) To invite the winner to attend conference as a guest of the NBMC

**Submitted by: *Sheffield Comm Hlth Unison***  
**NBMC Policy: *Support***

### **Amendment 27.1**

In paragraph three beginning 'The award would .....

delete 'The award would not be limited to achievement inside Unison but it would encompass the achievements of a Black Member that embodies all that Nelson Mandela stood for, such as selflessness, courage and determination.'

Replace with:

'The award would be limited to Black members' achievements inside UNISON that positively reflect on the union's key objective and/or Black members' working lives. It would encompass the achievements of a Black Member that embodies all that Nelson Mandela stood for, such as selflessness, courage and determination.'

**Submitted by: *National Black Members' Committee***

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## **28. THE BLACK VOTE IN 2015**

Conference, too often the colour of your skin can determine your life chances. Black communities must reject the economic policies and inequality crippling their basic human rights.

The Black vote must be used as a force to demand that the next elected Government addresses persistent race inequality across the UK.

It is important to understand that the political voice and participation of Black communities over the coming months is one of the key components to the election of the next UK Government and Prime Minister.

The programme of cuts and privatisation affecting the NHS, Schools, Welfare, Employment Law across Public Services is having a detrimental and adverse impact on many Black people, it is important to get the message across that your vote can make a difference.

We therefore call on the NBMC to:

- 1) Continue to work with the NEC, Labour Link and Operation Black Vote as part of the political campaign leading up to and beyond the next General Election in 2015;
- 2) Continue to encourage Black members to become an active political voice in UNISON through various medium distribution like Black Action, E Focus, UNISON website;
- 3) Continue to challenge the undermining of equality legislation across the UK.

**Submitted by: Hammersmith & Fulham**

**NBMC Policy: Support**

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## **29. STOP THE VIOLENCE AND KILLING OF INNOCENT BLACK WOMEN AND BLACK MEN**

Conference condemns the violence perpetrated against innocent Black women and men in the name of so called Honour killing.

According to the United Nations, 5,000 women are murdered by family members in honour killings every year, 1000 in India, 1000 in Pakistan

and 12 in the UK.

On 27th May 2014, 25 year old Farzana Parveen, a pregnant Pakistani woman was beaten to death by about 20 people, including her brothers, father and cousin outside a high court building in the eastern City of Lahore. Several weeks after Farzana's death, 18 year old Saba Maqsood had survived being shot and thrown into a canal by her family because she married for love.

Disproportionately this type of crime mainly affects women; however men are also killed as a consequence of honour killing. This is apparent in the case of Sajjad Ahmed a newlywed young man who on 18th June 2014 was brutally murdered alongside his young wife because his family members were against the marriage.

On 9th September 2014 Raghunath Rai a 21 year old was executed on the directive of a local village court in Bihar for falling in love with and marrying a local girl. This is just an example of some of the heinous crimes against humanity.

The so-called honour killings often originate from tribal traditions and are common to rural areas. Honour killing is the murder of a person accused of bringing shame upon his or her family. It happens worldwide, from South America to Asia.

Conference agrees that there can be no honour in the brutalization and murder of innocent people who have a fundamental right to freedom of choice without having their Human Rights violated. We cannot sit back and allow these killings to continue unchallenged.

Conference calls upon the National Black Members Committee (NBMC) to:

- 1) Liaise with the National Executive Committee (NEC), and the TUC to raise awareness of the continuous use of Honour Killings;
- 2) Work with the International Committee to campaign for robust enforcement laws to prosecute those inciting violence, in particular those calling for and, in some cases offering rewards for the honour deaths of individuals;
- 3) Liaise with all relevant bodies, including Amnesty International and Honour Based Violence Awareness Network (HBVA) in order to establish a strategy to tackle the growing problem of honour killings.

**Submitted by: Birmingham UNISON Branch**  
**NBMC Policy: Support**

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### **30. RISE OF RACISM IN THE UK**

Conference, a recent study commissioned by NatCen, an organisation which looks into British Social Attitudes has overwhelmingly established that racism is on the rise.

While thirty per cent of Britons described themselves as having “very or a little prejudice against people of other races”, the survey also outlined that attitudes have changed since the 1980’s and throughout the 1990’s. This change in attitudes is very worrying, because the study has revealed that during the aforementioned periods racism was at its highest at 38% and its lowest 25% in 2001.

The survey is implying that the sudden shift in the trend could be down to or fuelled by the events of 9/11 (2001).

It also outlined what it deemed to be least likely and most likely areas of increased racism being inner London, showing a low of 16% and the West Midlands a high of 35%. The survey also highlighted that the figures rose with 25% of 17 - 34 year olds describing themselves as racially prejudiced compared to 36% of over 55’s.

The survey also went on to state that 90% of interviewees admitted to some level of racism, indicated that it was linked to what was perceived to be the high level of immigration. This element was also reflected in individuals concerns about immigration in their area.

Groups such as Britain First and the EDL are using social media to increase their numbers. Their followers are growing, many of them are not even aware of what it is they are choosing to support, they only hear the sound bites ‘ this country is full’, its an ‘immigrant problem’, few of them are truly aware of the hideous agenda of these far right organisations.

If we are too tackle this rise in racism, then we need to get smarter, we need to publicise how immigrants to this country have made it the great nation it is, how everyone on this isle is an immigrant. If the immigrants to this country left tomorrow, then there would be no one left on this island.

Conference therefore calls on the NBMC to work with the NEC:

- 1) To campaign with other trade unions to launch a social media campaign highlighting the positive contributions of immigration;
- 2) To produce and distribute literature to branches and regions highlighting the positive contributions of immigration and migrant workers;
- 3) To work with Labour Link for political support from the Labour party in tackling the rise of racism in the UK;
- 4) To work with community based organisations to challenge immigration myths and highlight the positive contributions of migrant communities.

**Submitted by:** *Sheffield Comm Hlth Unison*  
**NBMC Policy:** *Support*

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## **32. NMC CRITERIA FOR OVERSEAS NURSES**

Many migrant workers, who are registered nurses in their own country, have been working here as care assistants because they did not obtain the results required by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) at their English test (International English Language Test System - IELTS).

Clearly no one will question the necessity of good communication skills to work as a nurse in the UK. It is fundamental that a nurse can understand and be understood by patients, residents and colleagues.

However the current system does not guaranty this.

There are three issues with the current requirement:

- a) The NMC's IELTS score requirement is too strict. Applicants must obtain 7 out of 9 on average, but also 7 or more in each different categories of the exam. This is a standard required of university lecturers. (The exam also cost £140; many members have sat the exam numerous times... only to get 6.5 in one of the categories each time!);
- b) The NMC's IELTS requirement is not a good reflection of the English needed for the work nurses will be involved in. A high level of Oxford grammar is not necessarily what will best equip nurses working with

elderly residents in a private nursing home in rural parts of Northern Ireland or Scotland. Accents, colloquialisms, phone situations will be more relevant than a university lecturer's standard of grammar!;

- c) The English test requirement does not apply to European (EEA) nurses. This makes a mockery of all the arguments put forward to justify the strict test imposed on other overseas nurses. It creates a lot of resentment, especially in private nursing homes where a lot of Spanish, Portuguese, Romanian or Greek nurses have been recruited in the last few years. Not only is it grossly unfair... it can also be unsafe in cases where nurses are allowed to practice with an insufficient command of English.
- 1) Conference calls on the National Black Members Committee to work with other relevant structures of UNISON to put pressure on the NMC to revisit these criteria and to create consistent requirements to standardise the level of training and English expected of all nurses.

**Submitted by:** *UNISON Northern Ireland*  
**NBMC Policy:** *Support*

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## **International**

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### **31. THE PERSECUTION OF THE ROHINGYA MUSLIMS IN BURMA**

Official figures state that in the majority Buddhist country of Burma only 4% are Rohingya Muslims, a heavily persecuted group denied citizenship by the Government of Burma.

For the last two years as the country of Burma has taken steps towards democracy, it has become an ever dangerous place to be a Muslim. The persecution of Muslims has resulted in the displacement of over 140,000, over 240 being killed in the most brutal of circumstances. Many live in refugee camps at the borders of Burma, pushed out of a country they call home.

Being a Rohingya Muslim in Burma means you are denied the most basic of human rights, you are denied citizenship, you cannot marry without government permission, marrying without government permission can result in a ten year prison sentence, you are denied access to schooling, you cannot be employed, you cannot worship

freely, mosques are closed during Ramadan and Friday prayers are not allowed. These rules do not apply to the majority Buddhist population only to the minority Rohingya. The Rohingya do not have access to medical care since the Burmese government expelled Doctors Without Borders. This means approximately 700,000 people are without basic medical access.

In March 2014 the Burmese Government took away the identity of the Rohingya Muslims by refusing to recognise Rohingya as a category on the first census in Burma in three decades.

In January 2014 in the village of Du Char Yar Tan in the Rakhine state, 48 Rohingya Muslims were murdered by a mob that included Buddhist monks. The government refused to acknowledge the violence or the loss of life, even though the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights released a statement saying that these people had been murdered and asked for a full and impartial investigation; the investigation did not happen.

We are disappointed and saddened that Aung San Suu Kyi the Nobel Peace Laureate and opposition leader, a woman who has long enjoyed Unison support and is an honorary Unison member, who knows what it is to be persecuted, has thus far remained silent on the persecution of the Rohingya Muslims.

- 1) We call upon the NBMC to work with the NEC to raise the plight of the Rohingya Muslims with Aung San Suu Kyi. We ask her to use her political influences as the opposition to pressurise the government to protect the human rights of the Rohingya, to prosecute those responsible for the atrocities being committed against the Rohingya, to recognise the Rohingya as citizens of Burma.
- 2) Furthermore we ask the NBMC to explore how we can engage with Trade Unions in Burma to apply pressure on the Government to allow the Rohingya to legally seek work.

**Submitted by: Sheffield Comm Hlth Unison**  
**NBMC Policy: Support**

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## **Amendment Ruled Out of Order**

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**Reason: Not sufficiently clear**

**Amendment to Motion 11**

### **CARE WORKERS – PROMOTE THE NEED TO RECORD VIOLENT INCIDENTS**

After paragraph 5 insert:

UNISON research undertaken in 2012 into homecare revealed over half the respondents reported that their terms and conditions of employment had worsened during that period. In light of these findings UNISON's ethical care charter was developed to establish a minimum baseline for safety, quality and dignity of care.

At the start of paragraph 6 insert:

'Further'

Add action point:

5) Promote UNISON's ethical care charter throughout Black members' structures and support campaigns for it to be adopted by employers

***Submitted by: National Black Members' Committee***

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## **Emergency Motion Ruled Out of Order**

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**Reason: Action not specific to the Conference**

### **Ebola Virus Crisis**

On Wednesday 9th October 2014, the president of the World Bank, Jim Kim, admitted that the international community had 'failed miserably' in the response to the Ebola virus that has killed more than 4,500 people in West Africa and warned that the crisis now affecting Spain and the US was going to get worse.

With the first death in America and news of cases in Spain, western governments are now forced to take this global pandemic more seriously and a global fund is being backed to enable a reaction to emergencies instantly.

Conference, a high price has been paid for 11 months of delay and inter-agency arguments on how to respond to the Ebola virus, why is the current situation being held as some surprise? We are being told more should have been done before now. There should have been healthcare systems built, monitoring when the first cases were reported and a global response organised.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) said the number of deaths from Ebola in West Africa is increasing with no evidence that the epidemic is being brought under control. The US and United Kingdom announced on Wednesday 9th October that they would be scaling up efforts to deal with the virus which has gripped Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea. Keith Vaz, chairman of Britain's Commons home affairs select committee, said 'We must do all we can, both at the source and in the UK, to combat the spread of this virus'.

Screenings will start at Heathrow, Gatwick and Eurostar Terminals, with questionnaires on arrival, if their responses raise a cause for concern, they will be given a medical check and possibly put in isolation while further tests are carried out. Now the focus must be on taking global leadership to establish treatment centres and dedicate resources in the countries where they are needed the most.

We call on the NBMC as a matter of urgency to seek to work with the NEC and Labour Link to:

- 1) Monitor the global response to the Ebola virus and ask the International Committee to contact the appropriate authorities to continue to offer help and practical support;
- 2) Help support members whose families might be affected by the virus, with guidance and signposting to organisations that can offer assistance;
- 3) Have a bucket collection at the National Black Members Conference 2015;

- 4) Request that the NEC make a donation to emergency health relief organisation helping in West Africa to tackle the Ebola virus and to support Ebola victims and their families;
- 5) Encourage Labour Link to raise the concerns of UNISON on the global response to the Ebola virus crisis;
- 6) Work with Labour Link to support MPs to lobby the appropriate UK research councils to establish a dedicated fund which will fund research into finding effective treatments for a vaccination;
- 7) Report back throughout various mediums in UNISON;
- 8) Seek to work with the international committee to support trade unions representing health staff working in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

**Submitted by: *National Black Members' Committee***

