

2015 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Scottish Exhibition & Conference Centre

16 Jun 2015 19 Jun 2015

Warning: Items in this agenda are not UNISON policy until they have been debated and passed at Conference.

Organising and Recruitment

Organisation and Development

1. Planning Initiatives to get more Members Active

Conference recognises that activism is at the very heart of UNISON. Activists ensure that the union is accessible to members in the workplace giving day to day support and representation to members, encouraging other workers to join the union and building our organisation. Without activists we could not function as a democratic lay member led union.

Conference utterly condemns the Tories unwarranted attacks on trade union facility time, which has led some employers to take an ever more restrictive view of trade union facilities. This in turn has made it difficult for some activists to represent members, particularly members whose jobs have been outsourced. Conference believes that activists, with access to the facilities necessary to do their trade union work, are essential to good industrial relations.

Conference also notes with concern that pressure on existing activists is growing as a result of austerity and the continuing fragmentation of public services. This has led to a reduction in the number of activists, putting further pressure on those who remain, as their own work intensifies and they try to cover for colleagues who have left.

Meanwhile the number of UNISON members working in the private and voluntary sectors is increasing, while our activists tend to be disproportionately concentrated in public sector employment. Even within the public sector fragmentation has created problems, for example in academies. This leaves whole areas of public service where UNISON has fewer activists than our membership numbers warrant.

Conference recognises that it is evident from the membership figures that despite proportionality and fair representation being written into rule; women, particularly lower paid women, and Black people are underrepresented amongst activists. The current surge in membership amongst young members means that there is also a need for more activists among young members. Conference believes that in addressing the shortfall in activists it is important that we should also seek to redress underrepresentation amongst these key groups.

Conference notes the work that is already being done, which includes:

- 1) Issuing advice on best practice;

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- 2) The roll out of the skills bank;
- 3) Making training more accessible;
- 4) Greater emphasis on mentoring and support for activists;
- 5) Developing strategies for protecting and enhancing trade union facilities for activists.

The aim should be to increase the overall level of activism amongst members, not simply the number of shop stewards. All activism is valuable, and for many members activism is a journey in which their engagement with UNISON increases over time, as they gain confidence, or where they find a particular area where they feel they can contribute most.

Last year we established an annual organising planning cycle, involving the Joint Branch Assessment (JBA), Regional Plan, Service Groups and SOG's. Conference believes that it is essential to embed activist development as a central part of that planning process.

Conference therefore calls on:

a) Branches

- i) To identify those areas where taking into account fragmented and outsourced workers they need more activists and consider which groups of members are underrepresented to help the branch establish targets for the number of additional activists they need, preparatory to the JBA;
- ii) Encourage retired members to help identify and develop new activists;
- iii) And to formulate a plan for how potential activists can be identified and encouraged to become active.

b) Regions

- i) To ensure that all JBA's map activists within branches against all the employers covered by the branch, and examine the activist base in the branch to see how representative it is of women, low paid women, Black and young members;
- ii) And use the information gathered in the JBA mapping process described above to agree firm targets for activist development in each JBA with a clear plan of how new activists are going to be identified, trained, mentored and developed. The targets will seek to rectify areas of underrepresentation, whether in terms of representation for outsourced workers and or amongst women, low paid women, Black or young members;
- iii) To monitor progress against the activists' targets in the JBA's and report on how monitoring and evaluation will be managed in the regional organising plan;

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- iv) To produce a regional activist development plan based on best practice and aimed at targeting underrepresented groups such as low paid women, women, Black workers and the private sector, which should also form part of the regional organising plan.
- c) Service Groups
 - i) As part of the organising planning process to incorporate into their organising plans the development of activists in national employers where there has been fragmentation;
 - ii) In the case of private contractors activist development is particularly important. Mapping and targeting will be developed as part of the joint work programme between the Private Contractors Unit and Strategic Organising Unit in liaison with regions.
- d) The Retired Members National Committee
 - i) To encourage retired members to take an active role in supporting branches to identify and develop new activists amongst the current membership.
- e) SOG's and the Young Members forum
 - i) To develop plans to use their networks to encourage more members to become active in UNISON;
 - ii) To identify any barriers to members of the SOG or young members becoming more involved in UNISON;
 - iii) To review progress against plan on an annual basis and liaise with the Development and Organising Sub-Committee of the National Executive Council over both the planning process and progress.

Each of these steps should in turn feed into the annual planning process established at Conference 2014.

National Executive Council

2. Fragmented Workforce - A union for the future

Conference recognises that the rapidly growing numbers of our members who are not employed within our traditional core employers do not receive the same high level of support and assistance that all UNISON members deserve.

All members, regardless of their employer should be able to access support and representation and to participate fully in the democracy of the union.

Conference understands the very real difficulties many branches face in both representing and organising members outside the core employer, and in providing opportunities for those members to engage in the democracy and decision making of the union.

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Conference applauds those branches which have begun to address these difficulties in creative, ambitious and successful ways.

Conference asks that the National Executive Council develops and issues guidance to branches, suggesting strategies branches can adopt to ensure members in the fragmented workforce can access all the benefits of UNISON membership on an equal footing.

Conference also asks that the National Executive Council require that all UNISON systems and processes are focussed on making it as simple as possible for our branches and activists to work to build the organisation.

Eastern Region

3. Modernising our union

Conference notes that, in a time of austerity and job cuts, our recruitment figures for the past year are still encouraging. We commend our activists and staff for their efforts.

However, there is still a need to recruit and organise more young members in our union. Given that the majority of public sector workers are women, it is essential that we devise ways to attract young women into our movement, and ensure that our agenda is one in which their aspirations are met, and that our organisation is one in which they can reach their full potential as UNISON members.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to work with the self organised groups, Young Members' Forum other appropriate bodies in UNISON to:

- 1) Collaborate with student unions, nursing and technical colleges etc to raise awareness of the benefits of union membership and to recruit eligible students into membership at the end of their period of study;
- 2) Ensure that our branches, regions and formal structures are "user friendly" and easy to access – including by the use of social media;
- 3) Work with regions to identify appropriate student events where UNISON could have a recruitment and information stand;
- 4) Identify the issues which are of concern to potential young members, including those which are of particular concern to young women, and the barriers to them joining a union.

National Women's Committee

4. UNISON Young Members Awards

Conference believes it is important to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of young members in their recruiting and organising activity.

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Conference therefore instructs the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Institute an annual young trade unionist award for the young member who has demonstrated their individual commitment to building an effective union through innovative recruiting, organising, and/or campaigning activist;
- 2) Institute an annual youth campaign award for the best youth campaign (which as a campaign would be open to a group of members);
- 3) Call on regions to institute similar awards at regional level;
- 4) Submit the award-winners of 1) and 2) above as the UNISON nominations for the TUC equivalent of these awards.

National Young Members' Forum

Recruitment and Organising

5. Young Workers Month

Conference welcomes the work of UNISON's National and Regional Young Members Forums to raise the profile of young workers and young members through activity during young workers month, which is now held in November each year under the auspices of the TUC.

Conference believes that recruiting young workers and organising young members is an all-year-round activity, but that the young workers month can provide a particular focus for specific issues, and is an opportunity to celebrate the contribution that young members make to UNISON and the trade union and labour movement in general.

Conference therefore instructs the National Executive Council to call on all branches to help support and develop a UNISON-wide vibrant young workers month by committing to at least one activity around young worker and/or youth-oriented issues in November each year, suggested activities being:

- 1) A recruitment activity specifically targeting young workers;
- 2) Seeking a visit to a local school to talk to students about trade unions (utilising the 'Unions Into Schools' online materials where appropriate);
- 3) Campaigning for the Living Wage and an end to the age-discriminatory and low level national minimum wage (Living Wage week falls in November);
- 4) Organising a political education and/or social event for young workers.

National Young Members' Forum

Education & Training

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6. Meeting the training needs of UNISON activists in challenging times

The challenges facing the trade union movement in relation to developing and training activists have rarely been as difficult as they are now, yet the need to ensure our representatives are confident and skilled is greater than ever.

Last year the coalition government announced that full funding for trade union education at level 3 and above would cease in September 2015. This will directly affect all diploma and organising academy courses and as a consequence the TUC will be unable to offer many such programmes. From September 2016, this change in funding will impact on all trade union education delivered by the TUC. This will have a major and potentially devastating effect on TUC centres at Colleges across England and Wales and will make the crucial role of training our reps much harder.

Already the effects of austerity mean that as a union we are identifying fewer activists and finding it more difficult to arrange training. According to RMS data in 2014 fewer stewards were recruited than in 2013. The rate at which new reps are trained in regions is holding up well, and new initiatives such as the new stewards' e-note, which is now sent to all new stewards once they have been added to RMS, have been well received.

However we need a step change across the union in the way stewards and other workplace reps are supported and encouraged to become active before they are trained, in how they are trained and in how they are supported in the workplace following their training.

This is particularly significant an issue in the private and community sector. Conference notes that UNISON's Organising strategy has already established the following objectives in relation to activist and member learning and training:

- 1) To ensure that elected representatives, branch officers and workplace contacts are able to access training and follow up support which is timely, accessible and relevant to their specific needs;
- 2) To support the development of activists;
- 3) To develop and support roll out of lifelong learning initiatives to support member development and confidence, and as part of strategic organising and recruitment campaigning.

In line with these objectives, Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Extend e-learning to supplement, support and augment face to face training, for example by introducing further blended face to face and distance learning along the lines of the new version of the organising steward course aimed at reps in the private and community sector and from non-recognised workplaces;
- b) Explore options for enabling low paid workers including in private companies and where there is no recognition to attend face to face training, including options for paying loss of earnings, and delivering existing short, flexible modules to small groups;

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- c) Develop a plan to track closely new activists identified as part of the private company organising campaign, and organise relevant training as quickly as possible for the new reps, where possible with other private sector reps;
- d) Work to improve data collection, monitoring and information provided to branches about untrained reps including in private and community employers. Improvements to AMT (the training database within RMS) will make it easier for branches to identify untrained stewards by employer;
- e) Work with regions and the TUC to minimise course cancellations and, recognising that the financial climate sometimes makes these inevitable, to minimise the impact of course cancellations on new reps;
- f) Develop training for reps from lead employers to support them in negotiating and bargaining on behalf of members in small private employers where an organising strategy is not practical;
- g) Continue to develop a national network of lay tutors able to support flexible delivery of training and member learning.

Conference calls on regions and branches to:

- i) Ensure branches have filled the branch education co-ordinator (BEC) post, and work with BEC's to support reps including from the private and community sectors by providing them with a named contact, buddy or mentor, and ensuring that they can participate in appropriate training;
- ii) Identify potential union learning reps and lay tutors who can be trained to deliver short workshops in the branch;
- iii) Promote and deliver short, flexible modules for new workplace contacts to get them active quickly;
- iv) Take advantage of the member learning offer workshops including Your Skills, Your Future and longer programmes including Return to Learn, as a means of encouraging members to get involved in the union. Both programmes are supported by Learning and Organising Services who can help with publicity and providing a tutor.

National Executive Council

7. Demystifying the union - boosting participation by explaining how we work

Conference notes that while the union has a significant training programme for lay activists and members little of this deals with the organisation and operation of the union above branch level. The organisation and language of Regions, Service Groups, the National Executive Council and National Executive Council Committees remain a mystery to many.

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Conference believes that this limits the ability of members and activists to identify both how to pursue issues they are concerned about and how to stand for positions in the union above branch level.

Doing more to explain how we operate should open up the union to greater participation, including that of members from disadvantaged groups. It would also help make clear the accountability of office holders at all levels.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to work with all relevant bodies in the union to develop and deliver training packages which enable members and activists to:

- 1) Understand how the union as a whole operates;
- 2) Understand the role and function of Regional, Service Group and Self Organised Group bodies, the National Executive Council and National Executive Council Committees;
- 3) Understand how they can (through their branch, etc.) raise issues with these bodies between conferences;
- 4) Understand how they can stand for election to these bodies, and the levels of commitment they would be taking on.

We believe this training should be capable of being delivered in a variety of formats. As well as being delivered face-to-face an open access e-learning option – perhaps supported by short online videos – should be available. The materials for face-to-face delivery should also be available for branches to use on their steward inductions, etc.

South West Yorkshire Partnership Health

Branch Organisation

8. Higher Education as a Service Group

Conference notes that:

- 1) The Higher Education (HE) Service Group is one of seven official divisions of UNISON;
- 2) Members of HE within UNISON have a proud record of sharing experiences and learning the lessons of victories and defeats, despite some historic differences between traditional and post-92 universities;
- 3) Efforts to bring HE together with Further Education and Schools have been defeated at Conference;

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- 4) In terms of organisation and promotional material HE as a service group has become less identifiable, epitomised by the generalised reference to 'Education Services' on the website;
- 5) Members and potential members are having difficulty locating HE material on our national website. It is also, therefore, becoming problematic for branches and activists to use this resource effectively.

Conference resolves to:

- a) Instruct the National Executive Council to demand that the democratically agreed identity of the HE Service Group is used consistently and where practically possible, all public and internal material relevant to HE is clearly identified as such;
- b) Make sure that the term 'Education Services' does not creep into UNISON's terminology without a democratic decision to re-organise the service groups being taken.

University Of Brighton

Participation

9. Fair representation for Disabled Members in UNISON

Conference is concerned about the level of discrimination currently faced by disabled people. Cuts to public services, welfare reform, changes to health and social care, reductions in disabled students allowances and bedroom tax have all targeted disabled people.

To fight this campaign against disabled people, disabled people need to be politically and societally active. We need to ensure that disabled people are heard at all levels of society including within our own union. Branches and regions need to be encouraged to support Disabled Members Self Organised Groups and encourage disabled members to become activists and this work should be led from a national level.

UNISON's rules state that the National Executive Council must include fair representation for women as well as reserved seats for young members and Black members. This is a credit to our union and confirms our commitment to fighting discrimination.

But Conference is concerned that these same positive steps have not been taken to support disabled members in their fight against discrimination. We commend UNISON's excellent work to promote equality for disabled people. We recognise there are disabled members on the National Executive Council but they are there to represent their service group or region not disabled members. There is still a considerable amount of work to be done if our disabled members are to fight prejudice, discrimination and achieve equality and this can only be done if we are represented at all levels including on the National Executive Council.

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Conference calls on the National Executive Council to work with the National Disabled Members Committee:

- 1) To carry out a consultation exercise, including the process for the nomination and selection of candidates, with other self organised groups, regions, branches and service groups to explore the benefits of having reserved seats for disabled members;
- 2) In light of the above to consider appropriate Rule Book changes to include reserved seats for disabled members on the National Executive Council.

National Disabled Members Committee

Negotiating and Bargaining

Bargaining

10. Tackling vulnerable employment and casualisation

Conference is deeply concerned that job insecurity, in-work poverty and workplace exploitation have become the hallmarks of the so-called economic recovery in the UK. While the growth of zero hours contracts has rightly attracted the public's attention, they are only the tip of the ice berg. The proliferation of short hour contracts, false-self employment and the continuing exploitation of agency workers underlines the workings of a deeply unjust labour market where flexibility flows one way.

Conference notes new research by the TUC exposing the growth of vulnerable employment, and highlighting:

- 1) 3.4 million workers working part time and wanting more hours, an increase of more than a million since the start of the recession;
- 2) The rapid expansion of self-employment, accounting for 44% of the net rise in employment since mid-2010;
- 3) The impact of term-time only working on support staff in schools;
- 4) The problems of unpaid travel time, unpaid stand-by time and 'sleep-overs' in social care;
- 5) 41% of zero hours contract workers reporting that they were in temporary work because they could not find a permanent job, a rise from 19% in 2008;
- 6) Significant lower rates of pay experienced by workers on temporary, zero hour and agency contracts;
- 7) The disproportionate impact on women, black, migrant and young workers;

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- 8) The vulnerability of workers in casual contracts to exploitation and mistreatment in the workplace including lack of access to basic employment rights.

Conference believes that low wages and insecure employment are fundamentally linked to the growth of in-work poverty and the increasing reliance by working people on in-work benefits, food banks and pay-day loans. Once workers on insecure contracts get into debt, it can be even harder for them to escape low paid, insecure work or to challenge bad practices in the workplace. Casualised workers struggle to secure access to decent housing or cheap credit.

Conference believes that action to tackle the casualisation of the UK labour market is desperately needed to restore decent jobs and decent pay and decent living standards in the public, voluntary and private sector. Significant progress would be made by:

- a) Reforming employment status laws and rules on continuity of employment to ensure that all workers benefit from the same basic floor of rights at work;
- b) Stopping the use of the 'Swedish derogation' or 'pay between assignments' contracts in Agency Worker Regulations;
- c) Regulating not just the abuses of zero hours or short hour contracts but also measures to ensure that all who want them get a regular hours contract;
- d) Extension of the Gangmasters Licencing Authority's (GLA) remit to include other high risk sectors;
- e) Increasing minimum wage enforcement by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), especially in social care;
- f) Giving trade unions the right to make formal complaints and trigger minimum wage investigations without having to name workers;
- g) Empowering the GLA and the Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate to meaningfully enforce the law and pursue illegal practices by bad employers;
- h) Improving workplace health and safety inspections;
- i) Increasing access to workplace justice by scrapping employment tribunal fees in Great Britain.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to tackle these problems by a strategy to:

- i) Influence government, the devolved administrations and other workplace regulators to have fair standards and resources for enforcement;
- ii) Negotiate for public authorities to take genuine responsibility for their procurement practices and to have decent standards for in-house teams and contracted staff;

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- iii) Consider what the union can do at all levels to bring vulnerable and casual workers under collective bargaining coverage.

National Executive Council

11. Campaign on pay increase for low paid agency workers in the public sector

Conference notes 1.5 million people in the UK are employed by employment agencies, with around 350,000 people receiving less than the minimum wage.

Very few employment agencies paying below the minimum wage have faced any legal action or being fined, despite breaking employment laws.

In October 2014, the minimum wage for adult rose by 19p to £6.50 per hour.

For 18 to 20 years old the new wage is £5.31 per hour and those below 18 years old it is £3.79 per hour.

For NHS Supply Chain (NHSSC), the majority of the new people in the warehouses, (via an employment agency), the salary paid is based on the minimum wage or just above the minimum wage of £6.50 per hour. Many agency workers have to rely on bonus payments, such as productivity, attendance and in some cases night working to earn a figure still below the living wage £7.85 per hour (outside London) as set out by the Living Wage Foundation.

NHSSC Agency workers for their October Pay, the increase in the minimum wage was reflected in a drop of their bonus payments, therefore leading to no increases in their overall weekly/monthly salary compared to the months prior to October 2014.

Conference calls on National Executive Council:

To instigate a research highlighting:

- 1) Where there may be employment agencies/contractors in the public sector paying the minimum wage or near to the minimum wage. To establish if any employment agencies are readjusting bonus payments to pay for the October increase to £6.50 per hour;
- 2) Where there is a strong public sectors connection with the employment agency, to campaign for those agency workers to join UNISON, highlighting the Living Wage Campaign and/or Agenda for Change (AFC) rates of pay;
- 3) Where appropriate, to consider making contact with the employment agency/contractor, in order to seek negotiations to achieve a reasonable increase in pay for those particular agency workers operating in the public sector which hopefully would be more favourable to either the present Living wage campaign of £7.85 per hour or the national pay rates such as AFC in the NHS;

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- 4) To report back to the next conference on the research and developments.

NHS Logistics

12. LGBT rights and collective agreements

Conference is concerned that collective bargaining and pay determination agreements have been under sustained Tory-led attacks. They have sought to destroy the very agreements that prevent them and their business friends from imposing poverty pay with no holiday or sick leave entitlements. Threats of regional pay bargaining are just the tip of the iceberg. Local talks, taking workplaces away from these agreements, threaten to damage the trade union movement's historic achievements.

Conference notes that workplace lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights were negotiated in collective agreements long before they were established in law. It takes negotiated agreements to bring legislative rights to life in the workplace. Legislation sets out minimum standards and collective bargaining raises standards above the minimum.

Conference notes that LGBT workers still face considerable workplace discrimination, made worse by the impact of austerity. The most large scale United Kingdom study into the ups and downs of lesbian, gay and bisexual people in the workplace (Manchester Business School, 2014) found that LGB workers were more than twice as likely to be bullied and discriminated against than heterosexual employees. LGB people were nearly 3 times as likely to experience a range of negative acts at work – and these were highest for lesbians and bisexual people. The research also found significantly higher levels of poor physical and mental health, highest for lesbian and bisexual workers.

Every survey conducted into the experience of transgender workers shows they experience even higher levels of discrimination, prejudice, harassment, bullying and indeed hate crime at work. One of the most recent (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2013) found that in the UK 65% transgender people personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the past 12 months. For 78% transgender people, neither they nor anyone else reported their most recent incident of discrimination, fearing it would make no difference or make things worse.

Conference notes that many employers have generic equality policies that pay no more than lip service to LGBT issues. Bisexual workers, in particular, are often an invisible minority, their existence denied or seen as 'fair game' for so-called workplace banter. They are the least likely group of workers to feel able to be open about their sexual orientation at work, which is known to impact on work performance and on health.

There are still significant numbers of workplaces without transgender equality policies. Knowledge of transgender equality issues amongst managers remains very low. Transitioning at work is an unnecessarily stressful experience for far too many people and our members regularly report difficulties with time off for gender identity services. Prejudice is rife.

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Conference welcomes the resources on bargaining for LGBT equality within UNISON – bargaining factsheets, guides for reps, and the members of our LGBT self-organised group.

Conference recognises that many workplaces, particularly in the community and private sectors, are not covered by national agreements, but they do gain from them. Nationally agreed pay helps push up local pay rates and nationally agreed workplace equality rights helped lay the foundations for LGBT and other equality based workplace laws and protections which all workers benefit from.

Conference notes the challenges of collective bargaining in the community sector which has numerous small employers, with members attached to local government or health branches. There are similar issues in the privatised sector, which hinders the union's ability to negotiate robust equality policies. Many private employers mistakenly believe they do not need to deliver on the Equality Act 2010, nor put in place equality strategies. However successful examples include Barnardo's, Action for Children and some housing association branches which negotiate nationally. The growth in regional community branches presents further opportunities to develop collective bargaining. We must continue to push our equality agenda with private sector employers.

Conference reasserts the principle that collective bargaining is the cornerstone of our political, organising and industrial strategies. Conference further believes that nationally agreed terms and conditions set a framework for us all, assist in the advancement of LGBT workplace rights and must therefore be protected and built upon. Conference notes that our negotiating strength also depends on our density and workplace organisation, across our diverse workplaces.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to work with the National LGBT committee to:

- 1) Support the service groups in challenging attacks on collective bargaining processes and agreements;
- 2) Raise regional and branch awareness of the vital importance of including equality and LGBT workers rights in collective bargaining negotiations and the UNISON resources available to support this work;
- 3) Support moves to entrench collective bargaining in all sectors in which UNISON organises, including community, voluntary and private workplaces;
- 4) Promote the pursuit of collective agreements which incorporate LGBT and equality rights;
- 5) Increase efforts to build our workplace density and organisation, including self-organisation, and support our equality work.

National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee

13. Equality Facility Time

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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 representatives would require a legal right to time off to “be involved in drawing up and enforcing employment and pay equity plans”.

Currently equality representatives have no legal right to time off to undertake their trade union equality duties. The TUC argued in a 2005 submission to the former Women and Work Commission that trade union equality reps (in UNISON this would include Equality Co-ordinators and SOG officers) should be given the same statutory rights as learning representatives – 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.

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:

- 1) Though less than half of equality reps surveyed were women (46%) this was unsurprising given that the role is largely undertaken by reps with other established roles due to the lack of specific time off;
- 2) 63% of those who had not had previous rep experience were women which indicated that the role was attracting women members into union activity;
- 3) Equality reps are more likely than other union reps to be from an ethnic minority suggesting these roles can attract Black members into activity.

This matter is especially important for UNISON given that:

- a) Nearly three quarters of our members are women, a majority of whom are low paid. The lack of equality facility time is therefore indirectly discriminatory in that women’s time is heavily pressurised due to caring responsibilities;
- b) A significant proportion of UNISON members are Black and the lack of equality time impairs Black activist’s abilities to challenge discrimination;
- c) Organising for disability workplace equality cannot be achieved on snatches of time taken from other responsibilities;
- d) The lack of equality time lowers the profile of LGBT equality work which particularly needs to be ‘out and proud’.

Four years of the coalition government and its austerity policies have rolled back equality successes and significantly increased workplace inequality. The lack of equalities facility time seriously impairs equality activist’s abilities to challenge

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discrimination in the workplace – it is becoming a 2nd class matter for better days. The implicit – if not explicit – perception is that equality is not as important as other trade union issues.

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

- i) How zero hour contracts affect discriminated against groups;
- ii) Disproportionate redundancies affecting Black workers, the growth of low paid casual jobs and the need for a living wage and pay equity plans;
- iii) Effects of the increase in stress and mental ill health on workers and employer sickness absence monitoring resulting in 'survival of the fittest' and the particular impact on disabled workers;
- iv) Cuts to hard built LGBT services.

Conference requests the National Executive Council to:

- A) Discuss facility time for equality reps with the TUC with a view to raising it with the Labour Party;
- B) Work with Labour Link to influence the Labour Party to commit to the extension of facility time to equality reps.

East Midlands Region

14. Direct Attack on Trade Unions

You may or may not have heard of a government paper called "Cabinet Office Guidance on Trade Union Facility Time". This paper applies to all Government offices and departments and purports to set out a principle for the allocation of trade union facility time.

A paper that effectively trumps any existing agreements.

Ignore it at your peril.

You may think it doesn't apply to you and it may not, for the moment!

You may think that it is not the business of Conference or this union, but, for our members in probation this threat is very real.

It challenges the very existence of the hard earned and long fought for stand-alone probation branches.

It challenges our ability to function within UNISON and to represent our members.

We fought long and hard to get our members and activists in to a service group that was representative of us, a service group that allowed and encouraged the full engagement of our activists.

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Our own conference.

This document will see an end to all that we have gained.

It limits overall facility time spend to 0.01% of departmental budget, to be shared between the recognised trade unions.

It stops 100% facility time for individuals and limits time in T.U post to 3 years.

We have done our sums and we think it would allow us 1 steward for one day in each of the 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRC).

That means one steward for one day a week to cover the whole of North Yorkshire, Humberside and Lincolnshire, and any training has to come out of that allowance!

This is a direct attack on our fundamental and legal rights to organize and represent our members.

A direct attack on UNISON

Marginalised and eventually destroyed. We cannot stand by and be picked off one by one.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Seek to mount a campaign across the wider structures of UNISON to publicise our plight;
- 2) Work with the Police and Justice Service Group and the National Probation Committee to seek to challenge the legitimacy of the "Cabinet Office Guidance on Trade Union Facility Time";
- 3) Via the wider offices of UNISON seek to publicise and campaign on the impact of the "Cabinet Office Guidance on Trade Union Facility Time" within the TUC.

Sheffield UNISON Metropolitan

15. Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre Glasgow Trade Union Recognition

Conference notes that this year's event is in the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre (SECC) Glasgow. SECC UNISON members continue to be disappointed over SECC management and Glasgow City Council's refusal to grant trade union recognition.

Over the last year, SECC management have continued their anti-trade union stance and doggedly refuse to positively engage with UNISON representatives nor allow them access to talk to SECC staff. CEO, Peter Duthie has made it clear SECC will 'not respond directly to requests regarding company matters from UNISON; effectively ceasing communication with the trade union.

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Over the last year a formal recognition request, under the Employment Relations Act 1999, was made to SECC as 10% membership of the total number of SECC staff had been reached. This was refused by CEO.

Matters have not been helped by majority shareholder, Glasgow City Council, who own 91% of the Arms Length External Organisation and currently has one Glasgow City Councillor and three Council employees on its Board of Directors. Despite a UNISON Glasgow City Branch communication to all 79 Glasgow City Councillors, including Council Leader Gordon Matheson, only 6 have responded.

Conference is disappointed with Glasgow City Council's refusal to become actively involved in the issue of trade union recognition, especially after Council passed a motion on 21st February 2014 stating 'Council reaffirms its commitment to the principle and practise of collective bargaining and negotiation to determine workers' pay and conditions and further agrees that this is the principle route by which all of the Council family should continue to conduct relations with their staff'.

Conference therefore calls on the Glasgow City Council leadership to abide by the Council's said motion and urgently meet with UNISON Glasgow City Branch officials to pro-actively discuss the situation at the SECC with a view to granting SECC full statutory trade union recognition and collective bargaining rights to UNISON and their members.

Conference also notes that current and proposed anti-trade union laws which give rise to situations such as ours and hamper the daily business of trade unions and their members should be challenged vigorously by UNISON, and through other trade union organisations such as the Campaign for Trade Union Freedom, in order that trade union members can have an effective and unhindered say in the working conditions of their own workplaces.

City Of Glasgow Branch

Health and Safety

16. 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 a UNISON survey of healthcare assistants found that 85% of the participants were verbally abused whilst 20% had been exposed to actual physical violence at

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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.

Further, 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.

We therefore call on the National Executive Council to work with the Local Government Service Group Executive and the National Black Members Committee to seek 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 address this;
- 3) Develop a campaign highlighting violence at work and how to combat this issue;
- 4) Promote UNISON's ethical care charter throughout Black members' structures and support campaigns for it to be adopted by employers

National Black Members' Committee

17. Health and Safety Expertise within Regions

Conference regards the health, safety and welfare of workers as paramount.

Conference believes the successful pursuit of health and safety legislation, regulations and practice in the workplace rests in large part on the efforts of trade unions.

Conference recognises the attempts of government to roll back health and safety provision. In 2014 Conference carried a motion to oppose the commercialisation and privatisation of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Conference considers the role of UNISON health and safety representative has never been more important in the face of government's public service austerity measures.

Conference understands safety reps can feel isolated at times in the face of the avalanche of cuts and changes and it acknowledges that local support for safety reps has never been more important in ensuring a continuing effective safety network.

To this end Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Instigate a research into the impact of local austerity measures on health and safety representatives. This research should include:

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- a) The identification of the workload on safety reps;
 - b) The employers' response rate in tackling safety reps concerns;
 - c) The limiting factors health and safety representatives encounter whilst undertaking their duties in the workplace;
 - d) The limitations placed on safety reps' paid release to undertake trade union duties or training;
 - e) Identifying where safety reps are encountering restrictions and/or reductions in their involvement on safety matters by employers;
 - f) Identifying any reduction in the involvement and support HSE and local authority inspectors have for safety reps;
 - g) The growth or decline in workplace safety concerns as a consequence of austerity measures.
- 2) Carry out an appropriate review investigating the needs of safety reps and the provision of local and regional support and resources;
- 3) Identify what other additional support could be offered to safety representatives, branches and regions. This support could include but is not limited to:
- a) Further training;
 - b) Supported campaigning on health and safety matters;
 - c) Local support mechanisms responsive to the personal and workplace needs of safety reps;
 - d) The identification of suitable local resources to assist health and safety reps in their front line duties.

East Midlands Region

Pay

18. Tackling the pay trap: raising wages through bargaining and the living wage

Conference notes evidence demonstrating that the share of the total wealth generated by the UK economy that is paid out in wages has been falling from 60% in the post war period to around 53% now; and that this is made worse by the fact that falling wage share is distributed in an increasingly unfair way, with the proceeds of economic growth since the early 2000s accruing to a small group at the top of the income scale, and declining real incomes for those on low to middle incomes.

Conference notes that disregard and in some senses hostility to collective bargaining by successive governments and employers has played a significant part in falling

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wage share and the increasingly unfair way in which pay is distributed across the economy.

The Institute of Employment Rights publication by Keith Ewing and John Hendy "Reconstruction after the crisis: a manifesto for collective bargaining" highlights that in 1979 over 80% of workers in the UK had some part of their terms and conditions set by collective bargaining, but that this has now fallen to below 25%. And whilst collective bargaining remained in many parts of public services, this was being undermined by pay caps and fragmentation.

In addition Conference notes that the current government pay policy is resulting in a growing low pay problem, with more than five million workers now falling below the official low pay threshold and the longest and most severe decline in workers' real earnings since Victorian times.

Conference believes that falling pay not only directly affect the workers themselves but also has a detrimental impact on the wider economy, with less spending power the country is forced to pay out £900 million more on tax credits than planned and tax revenues have fallen too.

Specifically, Conference notes that more than a tenth of council staff are now on low income tax credits. Many public service staff have had to resort to second or even third jobs to make ends meet.

Conference welcomes the successful campaigning work by UNISON, working with allies, to push for the living wage.

Conference particularly applauds the fact that staff in more than 12,000 schools are potentially set to be paid the living wage as a result of landmark framework agreements secured in 2014 and also the living wage achieved in the NHS pay agreements in Scotland and Wales.

While it is welcome that more than 1,000 employers are living wage accredited, Conference remains extremely concerned that more than a fifth of UK workers earn less than the living wage. Fewer than one in five FTSE 100 top companies are accredited living wage employers, but Conference nevertheless recognises the shareholder action campaigns UNISON has supported to bring this about.

Conference believes that the time has come to raise the National Minimum Wage (NMW) up to the higher level of the living wage, and believes that government should introduce a target for achieving this goal.

To such ends Conference notes the potential significance of the recommendations of the Buckle commission on reforming the National Minimum Wage and the Low Pay Commission, including the possibility of adopting a sectoral approach to tackling low pay. Conference further notes the overlap between these proposals and the ideas put forward by the TUC for wages councils to be established in low pay sectors.

Conference reiterates the importance of a living wage being used as a means of bringing pay up, not levelling it down, but agrees that this has to be introduced alongside a systematic strengthening of collective bargaining across the economy.

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Furthermore, Conference is concerned that uncoupling wages from in-work benefits will increase poverty if workers lose more due to austerity welfare cuts than any wage gains.

Conference believes that state benefits have to be defended and positive welfare policies promoted to halt the increase of child poverty. Items such as free school meals, housing benefit, childcare allowances and tax allowances are an important part of improving living standards alongside wages.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign for an end to the public sector pay cap and for fair rewards for public service staff;
- 2) Continue to highlight falling living standards;
- 3) Campaign alongside the TUC other unions to strengthen collective bargaining across the economy;
- 4) Promote a living wage as a means of reducing the blight of in-work poverty;
- 5) Undertake an evaluation of the Buckle proposals and the TUC's ideas for wages councils. This should include an analysis, carried out with service groups, of how such arrangements might work alongside existing agreements and bargaining machinery;
- 6) Defend in-work social security benefits, such as tax credits, to make work pay for the low paid.

National Executive Council

19. Towards A £10 Per Hour Living Wage

Conference notes and applauds the major campaign being waged by the BFAWU (Bakers Food and Allied Workers Union) within the national fast food takeaway companies, in partnership with the Fast Food Rights Campaign and Youth Fight For Jobs. The main thrust of this campaign is to recruit and organise young people into trade unions around the demand for a £10 per hour Living Wage.

Conference also notes that the GMB National Conference 2014 agreed to campaign for a £10 ph Living Wage in the security industry.

During 2014 UNISON members in Local Government (those covered by the NJC) engaged in a major dispute over poverty pay levels and the demand for a £1 per hour increase in wages. Conference recognises that, even if this claim had been met in full, thousands of Local Government workers would still only just be receiving the Outer London Living Wage of £7.65 per hour.

In 2014 UNISON members in the Health Service Group also engaged in a key campaign to raise members' pay to a fair level and to eradicate poverty pay.

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We can look across the ocean to the USA for inspiration. The 15Now mass movement in Seattle has won legislation which provides for a minimum wage of \$15 per hour. All across America 15Now groups are being established and are growing steadily. Conference applauds this initiative.

Conference believes that we need to raise the sights of members as to what is possible and look towards a Living Wage for all which prevents workers falling into poverty.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Support current initiatives in the UK campaigning for a £10 per hour Living Wage;
- 2) Send solidarity greetings to the BFAWU in support of their campaign 'Fast Food Rights';
- 3) Send solidarity greetings to the 15Now campaign in Seattle;
- 4) Publicly campaign within the TUC, with other trade unions and alongside other appropriate campaigning organisations for a Living Wage of £10 per hour;
- 5) Urge the UNISON Labour Link to take up this issue at all levels of the Labour Party.

South East Region

20. Campaigning for a Living Wage

Conference condemns the continued attacks on the funding of public services and the impact of the poor pay awards for staff in the public sector.

Our members wages have decreased in real terms and public sector pay no longer leads the way.

Many employers within the public sector are now employed on rates less than the Living Wage. Much independent research has been conducted to highlight the benefits of implementing a Living Wage with increased morale of employees and a drop in absenteeism.

By employers paying a Living Wage it affords people to provide for themselves and their families.

Conference we therefore call upon the National Executive Council to continue:

- 1) To support branches in working with employers to get them to adopt the Living Wage and become a Living Wage employer;
- 2) Work with the Labour Link to ensure there is political pressure for employers to become Living Wage employers;
- 3) Provide guidance and campaign materials to support branches in campaigning for the Living Wage;

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- 4) Work with supporting organisations to ensure we build alliances to work collectively to campaign for a Living Wage;
- 5) Ensure that any procurement agreements incorporate the Living Wage.

North Tyneside Met.

21. Pay in the Public Sector

Conference recognises that pay in the public sector has been in decline for decades. This has been a deliberate policy of successive governments as part of a neo-liberal economic policy. At the same time there has been an increase in profits and incomes from shares which has benefitted only the very richest in the country.

Conference notes David Cameron's statements in the General Election campaign that workers should get a pay rise but note that he had no intention of giving public sector workers a pay rise that would keep pace with inflation for this year, never mind address the years of relative pay cuts that UNISON members have suffered.

Conference supports the efforts of members in all sectors in seeking to pursue pay rises through negotiation, campaigning and industrial action and supports the co-ordination of effort across UNISON and with other trade unions, including where possible co-ordinated industrial action, to achieve decent pay rises.

However Conference recognises that just as the deterioration in public sector pay has been part of a political and economic strategy over decades then the response to it also needs to be political and part of a wider economic strategy. Therefore Conference calls on the National Executive Council to develop a coherent and ongoing strategy to:

- 1) Highlight the decline in public sector pay and contrast this with the increase in wealth at the top of society, therefore building support for progressive taxation systems;
- 2) Popularise the understanding that low pay limits demand in the economy and that increasing pay will promote a healthier economy, therefore building support for the Living Wage to be applied throughout the public sector and beyond;
- 3) Change the adherence to neo-liberal policies of political parties in power at all levels of government, therefore committing them to support decent pay rises in all negotiating bodies where they have influence;
- 4) Engage more effectively with our members through education and campaigning on the alternative economic policies that would include better pay, therefore building greater support amongst members for campaigning activity and support for industrial action.

South Lanarkshire UNISON

22. Pay

Conference notes:

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- 1) That average annual household income declined by £1,600 during the five years of the previous Tory/Lib Dem Coalition government;
- 2) That real earnings for all workers dropped by 14% under the previous Tory/Lib Dem coalition;
- 3) That income declined much more sharply for public sector workers, by about 18%, during the same period;
- 4) That the wealthiest in society continued to enjoy rising incomes during the same period; for example, the richest 1,000 people in Britain saw their wealth increase by 15.4% to a total of £519bn between 2013 and 2014 – double the total of their wealth in 2009, just before the Tories took power.

Conference further notes the legacy of rising inequality under the previous government, so that, for example, the richest fifth of households saw their income grow by £940 between 2011/12 and 2012/13, while the disposable income of all the other groups fell by around £250, with the poorest fifth of households' income fell by £381; the richest fifth of households had an average gross income of £81,300 in 2012-13, almost 15 times greater than the poorest fifth who had an average income of £5,500 (both figures before taxes and benefits).

Conference also notes that members in health supported national strike action in England on 3 days during the last pay round, while members in local government also backed the union's call last autumn for a national strike over pay.

Conference is disappointed that, despite signs of recovery in the economy over the last year, the incoming government appears committed to continuing cuts and austerity, and in particular appears committed to maintaining the squeeze on members' pay through below-inflation pay rises, as well as by attacking unsocial-hours pay in the health service.

Conference therefore calls on all bargaining groups to lodge substantial pay claims in all sectors (subject to decisions and aspirations at sector conferences). Any claim to include the demand that no worker be paid less than the Living Wage or London Living Wage as appropriate, and seeks to recover some of the significant sums lost to inflation under the previous Tory-led government's pay-freeze policies.

Conference believes that to achieve this, sustained legal national industrial action within and across service groups and bargaining units will be necessary.

Conference further resolves to approach other appropriate trade unions to win support for this policy.

Islington UNISON (M)

23. National Minimum Wage and Young people

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Conference, we believe Young Workers are discriminated against because of their age and that they do not receive equal pay for equal work.

In 1998 the UK Government made the National Minimum Wage law in order to ensure that employees in the UK are provided with “decent minimum standards and fairness in the workplace”. The National Minimum Wage is the minimum hourly rates of pay that employers can offer across the UK, therefore it is the lowest amount you can legally be paid.

Currently there is a tiered system that means workers get paid a different rate of the National Minimum Wage depending on their age.

The current rates are £2.73 for Apprentice (16 to 18 and those aged 19 or over who are in their first year), £3.79 for under 18, £5.13 for 18- 20 year olds and £6.50 for 21 years and over. This tiered system means young workers on the National Minimum Wage get paid a lot less than older workers for doing the same job.

A common argument for the tiered system of the Minimum Wage is that paying young people less gives them a greater chance getting hired yet we believe it is not fair to pay a group in our society less to ensure their employment. Instead of protecting young people this system allows young people to be seen as cheap labour.

Conference we believe the National Minimum Wage should be equally applied to workers, whatever their age. Young people aren't just working in Minimum Wage jobs for pocket money. Many of these young people still have the same living costs as adults such as rent, bills, food and transport. A lot of students use Minimum Wage jobs to support them-selves whilst studying at college or university

Therefore Conference instructs the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with our Young Members to actively campaign to eradicate the National Minimum Wage tiered system;
- 2) Conduct research amongst our young members under the age of 21 on how they are impacted upon by being paid less than an adult Minimum Wage;
- 3) Establish a working partnership with the British Youth Council and the UK Youth Parliament to support their campaign “ Everyone should be paid at least the Living Wage”.

Oxfordshire County (L)

24. Time to Stop Hiding the Real Cost of Living

Conference notes the major threat posed to pay bargaining by proposed changes to inflation measurement under consideration by the UK Statistics Authority.

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The Retail Prices Index (RPI) has traditionally been seen as the key reference point for almost all pay bargaining and for decades was published as the UK's prime inflation measure.

However, the governing bodies for statistics in the UK have launched a series of reviews over recent years that have diminished the importance given to RPI in official publications and raised the prominence of the alternative Consumer Prices Index (CPI) to ever greater heights.

This has culminated in a report commissioned by the UK Statistics Authority which recommended that RPI should eventually be discontinued and an adaptation of CPI should be adopted as the UK's principal measure of inflation.

We have already seen public sector pensions and social security benefits switched to CPI uprating, damaging living standards.

However, the knock-on effect on pay bargaining is that examples are growing across the economy of companies that have traditionally agreed RPI linked pay deals seeking to switch to deals based on CPI.

Conference believes this is a problem because the rate of CPI averages almost 1% lower than RPI and so reduces pay rises under linked deals by hundreds of pounds every year.

To investigate the reasons behind the gap between RPI and CPI, Conference notes that the National Executive Council commissioned former Treasury economics adviser Dr Mark Courtney to conduct a rigorous investigation which found that:

- 1) RPI is most relevant to pay bargaining as it is more tightly drawn around the working population by excluding the spending of the ultra rich, tourists and a large proportion of pensioners;
- 2) RPI fulfils the basic requirement of measuring inflation of housing costs, while CPI omits housing from its calculation – an incredibly major fault for any reasonable estimate of changes in the cost of living;
- 3) RPI uses a statistical method that provides a much more accurate estimate of changes in the costs of living than CPI;
- 4) The UK Statistics Authority is now set to begin a new consultation on the report that threatens the future of RPI and it is critical that we mount a vigorous campaign in defence of an inflation measure that accurately reflects changes in the cost of living faced by our members.

Therefore, Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Develop a strong UNISON response to the UK Statistics Authority consultation on inflation measurement over summer 2015 that defends RPI;
- b) Seek to work effectively with the TUC, MPs and statistical bodies as part of the campaign;

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- c) Provide practical advice to branches dealing with employers who seek to move away from RPI as the key reference point for pay bargaining;
- d) Work with the TUC and National Pensioners Convention on campaigns to return state benefits and relevant pension schemes to using RPI for uprating.

North Yorkshire Br. of Unison

Pensions

25. The dangers of the New Pension Choice and the urgent need for increasing employer contributions

The Westminster government announced in its last Budget that it planned to allow all those who have been contributing to Defined Contribution (DC) pension arrangements, the option of being able to take their whole pot of money as a cash sum from 6 April 2015.

Up to then contributors could take a maximum of 25% of their pot as a tax free cash sum but have to use the 75% of the value of their pot to buy a pension for life (When contributors used a lump sum to buy a pension this is usually called an annuity).

From April contributors who are over 55 can retire and decide to take the whole pot as cash in which case only 25% will be tax free and 75% will be reduced by their marginal rate of tax (20% for most tax payers and 40% for upper band tax payers)

The government plans to extend this option to members of Defined Benefit Pension Schemes that have funds including the Local Government Pension Scheme. Members of unfunded pension schemes like the NHS Pension Scheme will not have this option

Conference should be aware that converting pension into a cash sum may be in the best interests of a small minority of members but there are serious dangers that our members' and their schemes will face.

The risks posed by these proposals are:

- 1) Likely to cause cash flow problems for the funded schemes if a significant number of members transfer their money out of the funds;
- 2) Generally not in best interests of scheme member as they are likely to be paying tax where otherwise they would not - but temptation will be great;
- 3) Likely to worsen annuity rates further so for many members of Defined Contribution arrangements there will be no choice but to take it as cash and suffer tax;
- 4) Experts anticipate a new market in pension scams to target these lump sums;
- 5) Potential for vulnerable pensioners to be coerced into cashing in their pensions for someone else's financial gain.

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However, Conference believes the most pressing pension issue at the present time is not being addressed at all.

The biggest vulnerability for future pensioners lies with the inadequate level of employer contributions to Defined Contribution arrangements where there is no benefit guarantee and the member takes all the risks.

Low employer contributions mean that the pensioners' retirement pot is going to be unable to provide adequate income in retirement. It is the fundamental reason why pension pots in the UK are so small.

Conference recognises that UNISON negotiates hard with employers who are closing their defined benefit schemes both Final Salary and Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) and replacing it with a DC arrangement, to ensure an employer contribution is as high as possible.

However, there is the likelihood that if the employer contribution for the majority of those saving for their retirement continues to be totally inadequate, the pressure to dumb down all pension provision in the UK will continue.

Conference believes that it doesn't have to be this way.

In Australia where they have had compulsory employer contributions for nearly 20 years the situation is very different:

- a) Median size of pension pot in Australia is equivalent to £100,000 (A\$ 181,000);
- b) Median size of pension pot in the UK is nearer to £20,000.

This is because in the UK the minimum employer contribution under Auto Enrolment is currently 1% of a band of earnings rising to 3% by 2017 while in Australia the minimum employer contribution has been 9% for years expected to rise to 12% soon.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- i) Start a campaign for a decent pension for all workers to exert pressure on politicians of all parties to recognise the problem of inadequate minimum employer pension contributions and agree a road map to increase minimum employer pension contributions to 12% as soon as reasonably possible;
- ii) Make sure members are aware of the potential dangers of taking all their pension benefits as cash;
- iii) Lobby the Financial Conduct Authority and the Pensions Regulator to ensure proper safeguards for members of pension schemes that will allow members to choose to take all their benefits as cash;
- iv) Work with the TUC, STUC, WTUC and ICTU and the National Pensioners Convention.

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National Executive Council

26. Save our Pensions

New government provisions enabling pension fund members to cash in their pensions on retirement come into play from April 2015. These apply to all funded schemes – including the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), Social Housing Pension Fund and the Pensions Trust etc.

Conference expresses deep concern regarding these proposals. Not only will members retiring be exposed to misguided enticement to cash in their hard earned savings early, thereby potentially jeopardising their future financial security – but a surfeit of members wishing to take advantage of these provisions could endanger the future stability of the scheme itself.

Conference is fully committed to ensuring our members get a fair deal in their retirement and supporting the LGPS. To this end we call on the National Executive Council to organise a high profile member information campaign which explains the pros and cons of cashing in pension fund savings and where possible promotes the benefits of remaining in the LGPS once retired.

Housing Associations Branch (M)

Campaigning

Privatisation

27. Private Finance Initiatives (PFI)

Conference notes that across the 4 countries there continues to be a profit driven agenda including private financial initiatives (PFI) and outsourcing within public services. As both local government and health authorities struggle to set their budgets, our services are in immediate danger of privatisation.

Importantly we must not forget the services which have already been privatised and the staff that have transferred to the private sector under PFI/public-private partnership (PPP). Staff working for these companies are often employed on zero or minimal hours contracts, often working more than one contract in order to earn a Living Wage.

Conference recognises that the pensions that these private companies offer are nowhere near as good as a public sector pension. Conference restates its commitment to end a two tier workforce within public services. Conference believes that UNISON should be using every opportunity to bring staff that have been privatised through PFI and other outsourcing back in house. Whilst this may have a monetary benefit to employing authorities, there are moral arguments on a social justice agenda and arguments around the provision of higher quality safe and effective services.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council:

- 1) Support branches who are campaigning to have services brought back in house;

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- 2) Work with Regions within the 4 countries to lobby Governments to legislate to bring staff back in house;
- 3) To continue to campaign against the shame that is PFI/PPP.

Lanarkshire Health

28. Working together for better terms and conditions in health and social care.

Conference recognises and applauds our members employed in Doncaster by Care UK for the defence of their terms and conditions of employment and the determination they have shown by taking 90 days strike action since the end of February 2014.

Conference further recognises that this dispute, whilst being a defensive dispute about pay and conditions, is also about defending the client group who are amongst the most vulnerable in society and who are put at risk by the privatisation of our public services.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with branches, service groups, self-organised groups and region to campaign against the privatisation of essential healthcare services;
- 2) Work with branches and regions to organise Care UK workers throughout the country;
- 3) To highlight the argument that decent wages and conditions are good for the economy;
- 4) To step up the campaign against privatisation this impacts negativity on the economy through redistributing public money from wages and profits.

Doncaster District and Bassetlaw

Public Services

29. Campaigning for our public services and those that provide them

Conference notes the decisive role that UNISON must continue to play in campaigning for effective public services that embody the values of a good society – care and compassion, dignity and respect, fairness and equal treatment, accountability and the public good.

Conference further notes that the context in which we must campaign is characterised by significant structural challenges to public services. These include meeting increasing demand for care and new treatments, meeting the costs of technological and medical advances and addressing the needs of an ageing population. But Conference is deeply concerned that whilst these challenges are formidable enough in their own terms, the real debate about how the NHS, local government and other public services face up to new demands is being obscured by continued government obsession with spending cuts - even though austerity has

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clearly been self defeating, decimating the services that we rely upon and failing to restore the public finances.

In early 2015 the consequences of this policy are all too visible, as we see:

- 1) A crisis situation across the NHS, where patients are being denied services or are experiencing critical delays, not only in the acute sector, resulting from a mixture of cuts and Tory led reforms;
- 2) A significant cut in the number of vulnerable people, many of them elderly, receiving council funded care;
- 3) Huge difficulties for public services in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland as a consequence of reduced funding from Westminster;
- 4) A National Audit Office report suggesting that half of all councils in England are at risk of financial failure over the next five years;
- 5) Hundreds of thousands more job losses being predicted across public services in the period up to 2020;
- 6) Continued outsourcing and privatisation, despite evidence that this is costly and harmful to services;
- 7) Increasing demands on dedicated public sector staff as a result of an unacceptable squeeze on their pay and conditions and increase in underpaid overtime.

Whatever the result of the General Election this union will continue to campaign for publicly owned, accountable public services provided by public sector employees as the best guarantee of quality, efficiency and value for money. We will need to assess how to take forward this campaign work in the light of the election result and will liaise with regions and branches on our approach, assessing the challenges and threats.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Highlight the consequences for our public services of continued austerity and the impact of cuts on public life;
- b) Engage service users, the workforce and our communities in a public debate about policy alternatives to austerity;
- c) Continue to challenge the dogma of outsourcing and privatisation, highlighting the cost to the exchequer of such schemes, and pressing the case for an alternative procurement strategy incorporating economic, social quality and sustainability criteria;
- d) Set out the case for public spending, exploring the social and economic role that public spending plays;

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- e) Continue to set out the case for decent employment practices and fair pay in the public sector;
- f) Build a vision for public services that shows them to be accountable, collaborative and based on equality and universal access, including in the context of proposals for regional governance;
- g) Work through Labour Link and the General Political Fund to campaign and lobby politicians for positive measures to ensure that public services are sufficiently funded to meet the challenges ahead whilst upholding values of collectivism and social solidarity;
- h) Work with UNISON regions in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales on influencing, using the political funds, the 2016 Scottish Parliament, Northern Ireland Assembly and Wales Assembly elections.

National Executive Council

30. The Impact of the Economic Crisis on Workers in the Public Sector

The last five years have seen the Coalition Government use the economic crisis as a means of devastating the public sector. The Government's austerity measures, in response to the global crisis, have been extreme and harsh. The cuts in the public sector are too quick, too deep and causing devastation to the services that they provide, resulting in slashing vital support on which individuals and communities rely.

The Coalition Government is paying scant regard to the impact that policies are having on those affected, especially in the most deprived areas that have the greatest need for regeneration, jobs, social provision and growth. The crisis was not caused by the public sector but it is paying the price; services valued by all citizens are under threat of rampant privatisation and outsourcing.

This government has pledged to cut 730,000 public sector jobs by 2017 and to cut spending by £80bn, and already the North East has seen 59,000 public sector jobs lost. There has been an overall 40% central Government grant reduction over the last 5 years which has disproportionately hit those areas with the highest need the hardest. The Association of North East Councils (ANEC) has also stated that the grant cut for the North East would mean a cash budget reduction of around £190m (8%). There is no question that this level of reduction will have dramatic and damaging consequences for councils' ability to fund vital public services, such as children's and adult social care, that citizens and communities value and expect the local council to deliver.

No public sector organisation is being spared the Chancellor's axe, including the NHS which is being rapidly prepared for privatisation since the implementation of the Health and Social Care Act. Since 2011, NHS staff have been paying the price of keeping the NHS within budget through pay freezes, while coping with widespread reform. The Coalition Government's drive to privatise the NHS amounts to the selling off of the country's greatest asset.

The Government has also consistently been disingenuous with its figures. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), which represents

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public sector accountants, has stated that the Government is double counting local government and health allocations of funds for social care.

Millions of working people's jobs, pay and pensions are under threat, yet despite such heavy job losses in the public sector, it is noticeable that there has been no specific retraining or skilling programmes to assist those workers who have lost their employment. In the past when a region had substantial job losses in a particular sector such as heavy industry, European funding had been available for retraining those affected.

The future of public services is an issue that concerns people, not only as UNISON members, but also as citizens. UNISON has a valuable contribution to make in delivering and shaping services fit for the 21st century. Together with the Public Service Alliance, UNISON Northern have developed a public services manifesto which clearly articulates a vision for public services that works to benefit working people and communities. These principles should be underpinned in any trade discussion, such as The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations, where there is a potential threat to jobs, health and safety standards and the democratic ability of governments to make decisions in the public interest.

There is an alternative to the breakup of the public sector through commissioning and procurement, which is leading to the reorganisation of service delivery into the hands of private profiteers, with less and less democratic accountability and engagement with communities on quality provision.

Services that are outsourced through procurement and commissioning must be subject to accountability through public scrutiny. UNISON must continue to campaign to ensure facility time in the procurement process, and that the trade union is part of the scrutiny process through workplace agreements. The role of health and safety reps in public sector contracts is crucial and these rights should be expanded.

As well as protecting the rights of workers, UNISON needs to champion the rights of service users to have a voice in the future of the public sector. In the North East through the Public Service Alliances, activists have been able to join with service users, the community and voluntary sector to fight to retain vital resources and services such as walk-in centres, prevent schools from going to academy status, and come together to fight the closure of libraries and leisure services, including youth services.

Working people and vulnerable groups should not be paying the cost of a global financial crisis. There is an alternative to the austerity measures being pursued by politicians that are out of touch with the realities of ordinary people's lives.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign for quality public services that meet the needs of local communities;
- 2) Protect the terms and conditions of public sector workers threatened with privatisation or transfer to mutuals, co-operatives or social enterprises;

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- 3) Promote public accountability for the delivery of public services through effective and meaningful scrutiny;
- 4) Ensure that, through workplace procurement agreements, the trade union is part of the procurement scrutiny process and that facility time is made available.

Furthermore, Conference calls for UNISON to campaign at local, regional and national level with elected representatives and other relevant organisations to promote an agenda that:

- a) Petitions the European Parliament to call for European Funding to be made available for a comprehensive retraining program that would benefit and support public sector workers faced with job loss as a result of austerity measures;
- b) Defends employment rights and trade union representation and rights;
- c) Strengthens regulation to prohibit short-term speculative financial activity, and instead prioritise investment into socially beneficial and environmentally sustainable job creation;
- d) Reforms the tax regime to strengthen and rebalance it by closing havens and loopholes, and ensuring big companies and the very rich pay a bigger share;
- e) In terms of alternative models of delivery, promotes accountable public provision of healthcare, education, housing and social services that are protected and expanded to meet social and economic needs;
- f) Campaigns against privatisation across all service groups;
- g) Engages with citizens, employees, trade unions, employers and community organisations, in finding a way forward for enterprises, communities, and regional economies as a whole.

Northern Region

31. Fairer Taxation and the future funding of our public services

Conference is angered that between 2010 and 2015 a five year austerity programme, driven by Conservative ideology rather than national necessity, saw massive cuts in public spending, huge public sector redundancies and pay restraint across the public services on an unprecedented scale. In his 2014 Autumn Statement last year, George Osborne let it slip that the Conservative-led Government's plans were no longer about "balancing the books" but that he wanted to shrink the size of the state and return the UK to the level of spending of the 1930's – a time before the NHS and when young people left school at 14.

UNISON members have experienced the worst of the Conservative Party's failure to rescue the economy. With rising prices and falling wages, working people across the UK are worse off than they were before the 2010 General Election because of the disastrous economic policies of David Cameron's Coalition. The drastic cuts in public spending since 2010 saw the UK experience its slowest economic recovery for 100

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years. These cuts were made on the backs of the poor and disadvantaged, whilst big businesses and wealthy individuals continue to get huge tax cuts. The Tories allowed social security spending to spiral out of control because of their failure to address low wages, insecure jobs and the housing shortage.

Conference believes the UK deserves the best public services – but rejects the Conservative Party ideological belief that economic prosperity can only be achieved by reductions in public spending, the introduction of competition into public service provision and the privatisation of nationally provided collective public services. We do not accept that, as some have suggested, there is no “new” money to be spent on public services in 2015 – but that there needs to be a better balance between government income and expenditure. Savings could have been made by the last Tory-led Government in public spending – such as scrapping their “free school” and NHS reorganisation vanity projects in England. Reducing defence spending to invest more in education and skills, housing or transport would also see public spending targeted at social gain. Similarly, we rejected the tax cut for the rich that saw millionaires paying less tax whilst those on low incomes were forced to visit food banks to feed their children.

At our core, UNISON believes that a fairer system of taxation is the basis for economic success and also represents the key to achieving social reforms such as ending child and pensioner poverty, ending low pay and saving our natural resources. We need a modern taxation system for modern public services if we are to achieve the high standards of public services and infrastructure many of our European neighbours enjoy. This must not only include changes to the existing domestic taxation system, but should also include efforts to tackle tax avoidance and evasion as well as the introduction of a financial transactions tax. A fairer system of taxation will see those who can afford to contribute more to society doing so for the good of everyone.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to explore an alternative economic strategy for the whole country to provide the stable and fair funding our public services deserve based on a fair system of taxation. Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to do this by:

- 1) Working with regions and service groups to establish fairer and more stable systems of funding for public services including the reform or replacement of Council Tax and the impacts of reforming business rates and corporation tax;
- 2) Working with the TUC, STUC, WTUC and ICTU on building a UK-wide national economic strategy that promotes growth across the whole of the country and not at the expense of individual areas, regions or nations;
- 3) Continue to promote UNISON’s already well publicised “alternative budget”;
- 4) Explore protecting access to certain public services in law to ensure their funding is protected appropriately;
- 5) Supporting the work of organisations who campaign against tax avoidance and evasion to seek an end to schemes which channel profits by large corporations and the incomes of rich individuals out of the UK tax systems;

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- 6) Campaigning to encourage people to view taxation as contributions towards the provision of excellent public services for everyone;
- 7) Working with the political funds to campaign to ensure that the UK Government and the devolved institutions support fairly funded public services, public investment, job security and raising living standards which will restore our economic health.

National Executive Council

32. North/South Divide Funding of Public Services

Conference notes with concern the ongoing savage cuts in funding available to support public services. The Tory-led coalition Governments dogmatic pursuit of austerity and rapid paid down of the deficit has led to the loss of hundreds and thousands of jobs in the sector.

Conference is concerned that the impact of austerity has disproportionately affected local government services, central government has forced through cuts to the revenue support grant reducing its value by a half since 2010.

This has had a profound impact on the communities in England and Wales who have witnessed the loss of essential services. Revenue cuts coupled with service pressures has led to pay for local government workers being reduced in value by 20% since 2010, cuts to conditions of employment, more services being market tested and privatised and greater fragmentation.

It is also unquestionable that the impact of cuts has fallen disproportionately on women who have a greater propensity to work in local government or rely directly on the services provided by local government.

Conference also notes that the impact of funding cuts has had the biggest impact on northern towns and cities. The removal of grants linked to deprivation in 2010, the introduction of the New Homes Bonus and the retention of 50% of business rates locally, has effectively resulted in a direct transfer of funds from northern areas to those in the south.

Conference agrees that this is unfair and supports calls from local enterprise regions, city regions and combined authorities in the north for greater powers and funding to be devolved from Whitehall and placed under the democratic control of local communities.

Furthermore, Conference recognises the positive campaigns that our union has supported nationally, regionally and at branch level in support of our members and the service that they deliver.

Conference should continue to support campaigns highlighting the devastating impact of government cuts and campaign for a change of policy, both in respect of increased funding for public services, and also fair funding formulas for distribution of resources to communities across England and Wales.

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Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to campaign against all service cuts, privatisations and attacks on jobs, pay and conditions of service and to maximise publicity on the devastating impact of the government's dogmatic pursuit of its austerity agenda;
- 2) Co-ordinate the work of regions, Service Groups, SOG's and branches in campaigning against cuts and ensuring that the recruitment and organisation of new members and activists is fully integrated as part of these campaigns;
- 3) Produce a study on the disproportionate impact of funding cuts and produce a set of recommendations for consideration at Conference 2016 for a comprehensive devolution of funding and decision making powers from Whitehall to the Regions of England.

Yorkshire & Humberside Region

33. Public Spending Cuts

Conference notes that it was leaked in November 2014 that the Government instructed civil servants to find a further £25 - 30 billion worth of cuts in for 2016/17 and 2017/18.

Conference also notes The Financial Times believed that the cuts would be approximately £48 billion between 2014/15 and 2018/19.

Conference notes that employers have been attacking our terms and conditions and continually reorganising.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) State its opposition to cuts in services, jobs and terms and conditions by whoever makes those cuts;
- 2) Launch a campaign amongst the membership based upon a fighting strategy with the aim of defending jobs and terms and conditions from attacks by the employer(s) and to include in the strategy, lawful industrial action in accordance with UNISON rules up to and including strike action;
- 3) Co-ordinate any lawful industrial action with other lawful disputes, where possible.

South Derbyshire Healthcare

34. Time for a new direction for Public Procurement

Conference believes that keeping existing public services in - house should be the default position for all public services on the grounds of quality, accountability, efficiency and fairness.

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Developments in Europe now offer the chance for all devolved nations in the UK to take a new direction in public procurement that no longer encourage a race to the bottom through cut price contracting.

Conference therefore notes the new EU Public Procurement Directive passed in March 2014, which set out these new rules. Furthermore the UK Government transposed these new public procurement rules for England, Wales and Northern Ireland into the UK Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and Scotland has timetabled its own transposition legislation to be put in place for Scottish public services by the end of 2015.

Conference welcomes parts of the new EU Public Procurement as a step in the right direction for securing decent quality public services and work conditions for a public service workforce including:

- 1) Confirmation that the EU Directive does not oblige member states to contract out or externalise services that they wish to provide themselves 'in house' or through so called public public partnership models;
- 2) The right for member states, including the UK, to move outsourcing and privatisation contracts away from being based on 'price or cost only' award criteria, which has fuelled the race to the bottom on workforce pay and conditions;
- 3) The right to be able to mandate the use of 'quality' criteria in all public contract awards, to improve the quality of social, environmental and employment outcomes

Conference further notes however that the Scottish government, compared to the UK government, has overall used the new opportunities allowed in the new public procurement rules to offer the prospect of better social and community value outcomes and better employment terms and conditions in public service contracts. Scotland's procurement Regulations allow for these through a mandatory incorporation and reference to these criteria in their commissioning procedures to deliver quality public services whereas the UK Regulations, for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, have left these as only voluntary options for contracting authorities to consider.

Conference believes the UK government failed to make full use of the opportunities that the new EU Directive provided in moving public procurement away from damaging lowest price-only competition to a more quality based system that maximises economic, employment social and environmental outcomes.

Conference also believes that there are other regulatory areas in the UK Regulations which need improving and strengthening to ensure transparent, fair, social and ethical procurement practices. These include:

- a) Making sure the UK government meets its new a new EU obligation to ensure that when performing public contracts, contractors and subcontractors comply fully with applicable social and labour standards set out in EU and national law and in collective agreements;

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- b) Closing loopholes that allow private companies to set up social enterprises to bid for 'reserved contracts';
- c) Allowing public bodies to consider and reject bidders record includes:
 - i) Breaches of employment law including blacklisting of trade union members;
 - ii) Trade union recognition;
 - iii) The non payment of employment tribunal awards;
 - iv) Health and safety breaches;
 - v) Breaches of environmental and tax obligations.

Conference believes that it's paramount that workers and the public get a better deal from procurement.

Conference also believes that UNISON branches and regions must be able to utilise the new procurement opportunities to negotiate with contracting authorities better working conditions for members by demanding that award contract criteria include for example, paying the Living Wage, matching collective agreements, no use of zero hour contracts, access for health and safety reps and offering training and skill development and improved terms and conditions for workers in those contracts.

Conference, therefore, calls on the National Executive Council to:

- A) Continue to campaign for existing public services to remain in - house as a default position for all public services and for legislation to ensure that before any public service goes out to contract a public interest needs to be established, consulted on and agreed by the local community;
- B) Campaign for all public authorities to consider in-house options and non-market models every time an existing service comes up for tender;
- C) Continue to campaign for improvements in the UK Public Procurement Regulations to maximise the opportunities for worker protection, equality, quality services, collective bargaining and service improvement;
- D) To provide Service Groups, branches and regions technical guidance and training on the new 2015 UK and Scottish procurement regulations;
- E) To include negotiating and organising case study examples of contracts and procurement campaigns which have for example established the Living Wage, abolished zero hours contracts, adopted UNISON's Ethical Care charter, expanded apprentices' and other benefits to ensure better terms and conditions for members and provide recruitment opportunities.

National Executive Council

35. Sustainability of Vital Services in Local Government

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Conference notes the ongoing policy of Austerity that has been followed by the coalition government and the effect that this has had on funding for councils in local government resulting in drastic cuts to services over the last five years.

That this policy of an unsustainable level of funding from central government carried out year on year has had a cumulative effect on Conferences' resources resulting in a large number of workplace restructures and recruitment freezes. This has led to a huge number of gaps in the workforce at every level and had a devastating effect on services, particularly front line services such as Adult and Children's Social Care and Learning Disabilities.

That the culmination of this policy has led too many Councils reaching a point of serious risk in their ability to provide statutory services for the public.

Conference resolves to:

- 1) Work with councils to apply to central government highlighting this important issue and asking for sufficient funding to be made available for vital services;
- 2) Write to MPs and Prospective Parliamentary Candidates highlighting this issue and outlining UNISON policy on the Austerity Agenda;
- 3) Raise this issue with the Labour Party through the Labour Link;
- 4) Encourage and support branches to campaign on this issue on a local level.

South West Region

36. Care of older people

Conference supports integrating health and social care services providing the principal aim of doing so is to improve the quality of services particularly for older people. Conference believes that services can only be successfully integrated if social care is made, like health, free at the point of need.

Conference therefore welcomes:

- 1) The Labour Party's policy 'Whole Person Care' to integrate the two services in England;
- 2) Reports that the Labour Party is considering making social care in England free at the point of need.

However, Conference remains concerned that:

- a) The principal aim driving the present government's approach to integration is not service quality but that pooling budgets will save money and its analysis that integration is quite compatible with competition;

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- b) Labour has not so far rejected this approach, rather it too appears more concerned with the integration of budgets and organisations than of services and committed to a model where its proposed Health and Wellbeing Boards will commission services not provide them.

Conference reiterates UNISON's view that public services are at their best when they are delivered directly by bodies which have been directly elected to do so and which remain accountable to the general public.

Conference therefore urges that integration be pursued as an anti-market measure and as an opportunity to:

- i) Introduce free social care for older people;
- ii) Rebuild the public sector in social care and defend health from privatisation;
- iii) Defend and rebuild collective bargaining, level up terms and conditions and root out abusive employment practices like zero hours contracts.

Further, Conference believes it is vital that UNISON's strategy is based on uniting the aims and values of the workforce with those of older people and other service users.

In addition, Conference note notes that millions of pounds annually are saved to the economy by the efforts of unpaid carers looking after parents or other relatives in their own homes, often on a 24/7 basis. The great majority of those receiving such care are elderly people, many with physical disabilities or mental illnesses such as dementia. The Carer's Allowance (paid only if the carer does 35 hours a week or more) is £61.35 a week. Attendance Allowance of £54 or £81 a week is paid to disabled people over 65 in need of 24/7 care. This is "free Social Care" indeed!

Conference is appalled that what is a strenuous, physically and emotionally demanding job is not recognised as such and is rewarded at a level far below the National Minimum Wage.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to:

- A) Continue to bring together UNISON's campaigns on integration and on free social care for older people;
- B) Raise this matter with the relevant UNISON Service Group Executives and seek to ensure that, in discussions about integration, UNISON reflects the views both of UNISON members employed in health and social care and UNISON retired members who use the services;
- C) Raise the issue with the National Pensioners' Convention;
- D) Publicise and report on progress to regions and branches through all appropriate communication channels, including the UNISON website, U Magazine, In-Focus and E-Focus;

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- E) Seek the backing of the whole union and other relevant bodies in mounting a major campaign aimed at improving payments and other help for carers so that our retired members and all other elderly people needing care can have their needs met without their carers being exploited.

National Retired Members' Committee

37. Social Care Workforce

Conference notes with concern that community, health and local government social workers have long been vilified in the media when things go wrong. Individual social workers have seen their careers destroyed when they have been held to account for the failures of the employer to fund the service properly. Portrayal of social workers in television dramas has compounded the one sided view of the profession.

Added to this, the ruling by Lord Justice Munby whereby social workers will be named in reports will only add to the social worker being the target of abuse. Quite apart from the individual distress, the effect on recruitment and retention of social workers will inevitably decline.

Conference believes that all social workers provide a vital service, from cradle to grave, for the most vulnerable people in our society. Adverse portrayal of social workers in the media creates a negative perception of the work they carry out, potentially impacting on citizens accessing such essential services in their hour of need.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Issue guidance and advice to branches around safe staffing levels in the community, health and local government social care context;
- 2) Campaign to press all governments in the UK to review social worker numbers and to bring in the appropriate regulation to ensure employers compulsorily report staff levels and vacancies annually;
- 3) Encourage Regions to map all our community, health and local government social care members, including social workers so that we are better able to target information and organising and recruitment activity;
- 4) Seek to enter early discussions with commissioners of television productions to strive for a more balanced portrayal of all social workers in the media.

Cymru/Wales Region

38. Putting the Social into Social Care

Conference notes:

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- 1) The dramatic growth of private sector involvement in the provision of services for vulnerable older people, and for adults with significant learning disabilities and complex needs. For example, nearly 90% of residential care homes are now in the for profit or 'third' sectors, nearly a nine-fold increase over the past 25 years;
- 2) Similarly, many local authorities have outsourced all homecare provision, generally to the private sector, fostering the emergence of a complex, fragmented market. This marks the result of successive governments' policies, which have had a detrimental impact both on workers in the sector and also damaging implications for those reliant on care services;
- 3) Mass outsourcing has caused an accelerating 'race to the bottom' with regards to the pay and conditions of workers across social care as a whole, a race further fuelled by the scale of cuts to local authority social care budgets in the past five years with eligibility criteria becoming ever tighter and an almost exclusive focus on those deemed in 'critical' or substantial need;
- 4) Ironically, the Care Act 2014 has actually imposed further responsibilities on local authorities without the provision of any meaningful increase in resources;
- 5) By the end of 2014 UNISON's 'Ethical Care Charter' had gained public support from nine local authorities, which if implemented fully will mean an eventual end to the use of zero hour contracts, the payment of appropriate wage rates for travel time and the introduction of the Living Wage as the basic minimum in these local authority areas, but the Charter only applies to the homecare component of the sector.

Conference further notes:

- a) The critically important role of industrial action by UNISON members against employers such as Future Directions (Rochdale), Your Choice Barnet (local authority trading company in the London Borough of Barnet) and, above all, Care UK (Doncaster Supported Living) in highlighting both regionally and nationally the 'race to the bottom', particularly in the provision of services to adults with learning disabilities;
- b) The inexorable link between the erosion of pay and conditions and a decline in the standard of care to some of the most vulnerable members of society.

Conference believes:

- i) The 'Ethical Care Charter' has demonstrated real value as a campaigning tool, but is in need of elaboration and extension to the whole of the social care sector, particularly residential care homes and supported living projects;
- ii) The substantial and continuing growth of the social care sector as an employer for the foreseeable future highlights the importance of widespread campaigns to recruit to UNISON's ranks and to develop effective union organisation both at workplace level and across employers;

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- iii) As with healthcare, so with social care the pursuit of profit should ultimately play no part, and so it is essential both to halt and reverse the tide of privatisation that has swept the sector;
- iv) Though there is a compelling case for significantly greater integration of health and social care, this must be on the basis of publicly accountable direct provision, with an upwards levelling of pay, terms and conditions, rather than the erosion so characteristic of recent years, which in turn will require substantial increases in real terms spending at least over the course of the next decade.

Conference resolves:

- A) The union should intensify campaigning at all regional levels for the adoption of the 'Ethical Care Charter', with a view to a high profile launch of an expanded version with a set of minimum demands for the social care sector as a whole;
- B) UNISON should make use of the 'Ethical Care Charter's' demands as part of a major recruitment drive throughout the sector;
- C) To call on the Labour Link to request that the Labour Party commits not only to repeal the Health & Social Care Act 2012, but to take concrete steps at all levels of government to reverse the marketisation of social care;
- D) To maximise awareness of and support for lawful industrial action in accordance with UNISON's rules by our members and fellow trade unionists where seeking to defend or improve pay, terms and conditions within individual employers;
- E) To popularise the concept of social care as a universal right akin to healthcare, provided by directly employed workforces within a democratically accountable public sector.

Camden UNISON

39. The Housing Crisis

Conference notes:

- 1) The ongoing decrease in availability of Council Housing or Housing Association properties for rent on secure tenancies;
- 2) The increase in cash discounts for existing Council Tenants and some Housing Association tenants to take up the right to buy;
- 3) The shocking rise in rents in the private sector as more and more buy-to-let landlords are cashing in and getting rich on the back of the housing crisis;
- 4) That a higher proportion of the rise in rents in the private sector is being paid from Housing Benefit payments – more and more of these claimants are in work;

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- 5) The increase in prices to buy a home, lack of rights for private tenants, and rise in rents in the private sector that has affected a whole generation and more who now have little or no prospect of finding a secure, affordable place to live;
- 6) The increasing market in so-called affordable housing that is out of reach for those people on average wages or below;
- 7) The detrimental changes to planning laws that allow developers to no longer build affordable or social rented properties;
- 8) The increasing marketing of property to very rich international investors so that property is used as an investment rather than a place to live;
- 9) The increase in households who are homeless and hidden homeless (living with friends/family, sofa surfing, etc) or those who are fleeing violence;
- 10) The massive increase in households living in severely overcrowded conditions;
- 11) The social cleansing of poor and larger families who are on the lowest incomes and on benefits from areas where there is employment and support services - particularly in London and the South East;
- 12) The commitment by the Labour Party to introduce some form of limited rent controls that would be welcome despite the proposals being extremely weak;
- 13) The growing number of protesters over provision of housing – Generation Rent, E15 protesters, New Era campaigners – that have helped bring Housing to the forefront;
- 14) That increasingly, developers are targeting council estates in prime areas to knock down and redevelop as “affordable” that put costs out of reach for ordinary people but make massive profits for themselves;
- 15) That in Scotland, the Right To Buy was ended in 2014 to popular acclaim.

Conference believes:

- a) That the housing crisis is now one of the major scandals of the 21st century that is leaving the younger generation, and people on average wages and below with no hope of decent housing;
- b) That the social cleansing of the poor from our cities, as part of the Tory agenda to blame the poor and those on benefits for their own plight, is turning the clock back to pre-war conditions;
- c) The cuts in emergency housing, refuges and other safe hostels are having a massive detrimental effect on those (mainly women) fleeing domestic violence;
- d) That laws such as that which has criminalised squatting has increased the numbers of empty “investment” properties particularly in London and the South East;

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- e) That the term “affordable” should now be defined more clearly and be based on a reasonable proportion of the average wage;
- f) That unless there is a massive building programme to build Council Housing and lower cost housing, that housing becomes just an investment opportunity for richer and richer people.

Conference therefore resolves to:

- i) Call on the Labour Link to press for stronger rent controls, better regulation in the rented sector, increase the numbers of council homes built each year, remove the Welfare caps that have led to the Social Cleansing of our cities; and end the Right To Buy across the whole of the UK in line with Scotland;
- ii) Campaign for the development of a new manifesto for Housing alongside organisations such as Defend Council Housing and other housing campaigners.

Camden UNISON

40. Massive Housing Crisis

Conference recognises the massive housing crisis which exists in London and nationally. In London alone the following facts outline the depth of the crisis:

- 1) It is estimated there are 809,000 too few homes;
- 2) The numbers sleeping rough in London have gone up 75% since 2012. The number of young people sleeping rough has doubled. Homelessness services have been cut by 25%;
- 3) In 2013 more than 800,000 Londoners were on social housing waiting lists. Now councils are slashing their waiting lists by as much as 75% by simply telling people they are no longer eligible;
- 4) 11% of the capital’s population live in overcrowded conditions;
- 5) Hardly any council housing is built and great swathes of stock have been sold off;
- 6) Much-needed renovation increasingly means handing council homes over to private developers or housing associations, which means no guarantees of getting their homes back for current tenants, and yet further reduction of council housing stock for future generations;
- 7) The vicious bedroom tax and other housing benefit changes have left thousands in deeper poverty;
- 8) Councils are moving hundreds of people out of London;
- 9) Secure tenancies are under attack. The most common reason for being made homeless is the end of a non- secure (assured) tenancy. London’s rate of landlord repossessions is more than double any other region;

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- 10) Private rents have gone up 14.5% in two years. In the private sector the average rent is over £2,100/ month in Hackney. The London average for a two bed home is £320 a week;
- 11) Some 'affordable' homes were approved by London Mayor Boris Johnson that could cost £2,400 a month;
- 12) Meanwhile private developers are handed billions of pounds of public money in subsidies, and public land, and buildings are sold to private companies sometimes, for next to nothing.

Of course the Con Dems champion privatisation and cuts. But shamefully Labour councils do the same. Labour councils have privatised housing and land. They have implemented the bedroom tax and cut jobs, pay, and services.

Conference calls on the next government and Labour councils to:

- a) Immediately stop implementing the bedroom tax;
- b) Stop all housing privatisation;
- c) Renovate homes themselves instead of handing them over to the private sector;
- d) Build council houses to provide secure jobs and solve the housing crisis;
- e) Register private landlords to enforce rent controls, decent standards and deal with overcrowding;
- f) Use their powers of compulsory purchase to take over empty houses (there are one million empty homes in the UK);
- g) Fight for the government to nationalise the banks, the house building companies and plan a mass council house building programme.

Hackney Local Government (M)

41. Campaign for Living Rent and Affordable Housing

Financial policies that have focused upon “Buy To Let” as the main source of that this Conference condemns the UK Government’s housing and rented housing in the UK. The result has been growing inequality, poverty, the break up of families and communities across the UK as working people struggle with ever rising housing costs, poor quality housing and insecure tenancies.

Conference believes that homes are for people not profits.

The lack of affordable rented housing and the “cleansing” of low paid working people from “desirable” housing areas in cities, town and villages marginalises people, breaks up families and ruins communities.

Homes that are affordable, secure, fit for purpose and responsive to the needs of local communities are essential to a fair society and the private sector has not been able to deliver these homes.

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Conference notes that the 1930's council house programme not only housed people in town and county, it provided jobs that helped the UK economy to recover from the Great Depression, revitalised local communities, peoples sense of identity and offered hope to millions for a better, healthier life.

Now in the 21st Century a "Living Rent" based system of rent controls, security of tenure and rented housing quality standards is needed in partnership with a public sector led house building programme to deliver homes for people, reduce welfare costs and allow rental income to be reinvested in our countries infrastructure instead of being dumped in offshore tax havens.

Conference therefore resolves to:

- 1) Engage with the Trades Union Councils, Shelter, other charities, community groups, faith groups and the People's Assemblies to build a broad based campaign to support the introduction of a "Living Rent" system and new council house building programme.

Aberdeenshire

42. When is a Co-op not a Co-op

Conference notes:

- 1) The continued promotion of co-ops, mutuals and social enterprises by the Coalition Government as being a preferred delivery of publicly funded services. By giving public sector workers a right to form mutuals, co-operatives and other arm's length companies, the government claims to be giving power to local communities and offering a greater role in public services for voluntary and community organisations and other civil society organisations;
- 2) The coalition government hope that by starving the public sector of funds they can force them to outsource to what they dress up as "worker co-ops" or "employee owned enterprises" with short contracts so that the private sector gets the chance to take them over in the future. Francis Maude - in a leaked conversation with the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) shortly after the last election - warned them that the "political risk" of outright privatisation would be "unpalatable" to the public but that "joint ventures between a new mutualised public sector organisation and a 'for profit' organisation would be very attractive";
- 3) Their real aim is to shrink the state and marketise all public service provision. The government is not interested in whether public service mutuals will exist in five years time, just so long as they form a useful vehicle for the break-up of the public sector today;
- 4) If the government was serious about the perceived advantages of mutuals, it would be looking to extend them to the private sector as well as the public sector but of course this is not the case.

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Conference believes:

- a) The public sector has been hugely successful in providing universal access to essential public services for the entire population, regardless of income. The creation of the welfare state ended the arbitrary and inadequate patchwork of provision that existed when charities, cooperatives, the private sector and municipalities shared the task. The public sector brought equity and justice as well as universality. Which meant that services were accountable to elected representatives and integrated within a national system not just left to the vagaries of the market;
- b) We don't need "staff ownership" schemes as we already own it, that's what being public means. We have public ownership;
- c) Oxfam have produced a report that shockingly shows that the world's richest 1% will own more than all the rest by 2016. That means that there is a huge amount of wealth being produced by the workers of Britain but only a tiny number of people are benefitting from that wealth. We can afford the health service, fire service, great schools and free university education for all that want it and all of the public services that benefit our communities enormously;
- d) That all the major parties are out of step with public opinion that is clearly and strongly against the privatisation of the public sector;
- e) In the sixth richest economy in the world we can afford world class public services.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- i) Continue to support branches to campaign for the retention of public services;
- ii) Continue to publicise the impact of mutualisation on members terms and conditions and the services they deliver, across all branches;
- iii) Continue to publish guidance, and to offer support to branches facing the imposition of mutualisation and spin outs by their employers;
- iv) Ask the Affiliated Political Fund (APF) officers to produce information for the Labour Party on the problems of spin offs;
- v) Campaign inside the Labour Party for a position of opposition to the Coalition privatisation plans.

Birmingham UNISON Branch

Campaigns

43. Union busting by UK Public Services Providers

Conference notes:

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- 1) That a number of housing associations, charities and private employers who provide public services are openly hostile to trade unions, carry out American style anti-union practices and refuse to recognise trade unions;
- 2) The right of free assembly and collective bargaining is a fundamental human right enshrined in international law. Any failure by any employer to honour these rights with regard to trade unions means they do not respect human rights;
- 3) We note that “not for profit” or “third sector” employers are normally registered charities and should share a social ethos with regard to good governance and respecting human rights;
- 4) Public service providers who do not treat their staff with respect or dignity will not treat their clients or residents with respect either;
- 5) Replacing free and democratic trade unions with internal “staff associations” is historically a central plank of the philosophy called “corporatism” which has direct links with far right political groups in the UK and abroad;
- 6) All public service employers are dependent on public procurement and funding, direct or indirect. While at the same time many pay their senior managers huge amounts of money;
- 7) Many supporters of national charities would be horrified to find out that these charities refuse to recognise or engage with independent trade unions;
- 8) There is a huge reputational and financial risk to employers who engage in such anti-trade union busting.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Actively support and help campaign against union busting by public service providers;
- b) Draw up a campaign plan on how to organise in public service providers that we do not currently have trade union recognition;
- c) Call upon National Labour Link to examine whether local councils and a future Labour Government should debar any public service provider that does not recognise trade unions from access to public funding or procurement;
- d) Call upon the Government to hold an independent public enquiry into the governance and democratic deficit of employers who provide public services.

Greater London Region

44. Solidarity with PCS

Conference extends our solidarity to the Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS), who have been enduring a sustained attack, motivated by the anti-union ideology of the Tory dominated coalition government. As the union facing the government directly as an employer or procurer of services PCS are at the sharp end of a wider attack on trade union rights.

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Measures such as the removal of check off, withdrawal of facilities and the systematic victimisation of union representatives are designed to fundamentally weaken PCS or even destroy them as an independent union.

Conference believes that it is essential that the whole union movement supports PCS in these circumstances.

If, as we hope, the Tory led coalition has been removed in May's general election we call upon the incoming government to reverse these attacks as a clear signal of their respect for the positive role trade unions play.

Conference recognises that UNISON may seek limited union recognition within the civil service in certain circumstances in order to maintain our ability to represent and protect discreet groups of members subject to a transfer of employer (such as OFSTED).

Conference reaffirms that UNISON has no objective to seek to organise more widely within the civil service in areas that have been accepted broadly by the trade union movement as PCS's sphere of organisation and influence.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to continue to discuss with PCS the best way to work collaboratively to deal with situations where members are transferred between employers within each union's sphere of organisation and influence.

Conference agrees to send a message of support and solidarity to PCS from this Conference.

Tower Hamlets UNISON (M)

45. Fair Treatment for Veterans

Conference notes that many veterans of the armed forces struggle to make the transition from their military career to civilian life and that this has led to high numbers of veterans suffering depression, ill health, homelessness and involvement with the criminal justice system.

Whilst noting that the shortage of social housing and cuts in mental health services affects the whole community conference notes that this can have a significant impact on veterans.

Serving your country, regardless of how people view the morality of the action, should not result in being excluded from the community you came from or wish to settle in, nor abandoned by the governments you served.

Conference notes that in Scotland many local authorities and the Scottish Government have developed policies and services to assist veterans through housing advice, health support and re-training to address some of the shortfalls. However the UK government has failed to provide adequate funding to support these and to provide more.

Conference supports the Poppy Scotland and Royal British Legion campaign, Insult to Injury, which highlights that some veterans injured during Service are having to

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give up most of their compensation to pay for the costs of their social care and argues that this should stop.

Conference supports the call for a national strategy for supporting veterans within the criminal justice system, developed in conjunction with service charities, to ensure that ex-Service personnel are identified, their needs assessed and effective support provided, to help them resettle in the community and reduce the risk of reoffending.

However the most effective support to veterans would be to provide adequate support prior to being de-mobbed and in the months and years immediately after in order to enable them to re-adjust to civilian life and avoid the difficulties that can result in homelessness and criminal offences.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to raise with:

- 1) The UK government the need for a properly funded strategy and policies to support the needs of veterans;
- 2) The UK, and devolved governments to harmonise the guidance given to local authorities on the two military compensation schemes so local authorities can fully disregard War Disablement Pensions from means test for social care. Further, each government should establish a fund which councils can access (without 'strings'), to meet additional costs.

South Lanarkshire UNISON

Economy

46. Challenging Growing Inequality

For the past 30 years the economic philosophy has been that wealth would 'trickle down' to working people, and it has also been argued that austerity was necessary to build a future for subsequent generations and lift living standards.

The reality has been that ordinary people have not seen the quality jobs and higher living standards that were assured would follow, and working people have watched wages stagnate while big business profits soar. There is clearly growing inequality in society, which has been displayed by a recent Oxfam report that states by 2016 the top 1% will possess more than 50% of the world's wealth.

UNISON need to be pushing the debate with politicians and economists to place inequality at the forefront of future discussions and economic policies. Economic and productivity structural reforms cannot ignore the social impact of inequality. Our economic and social strategy must centre on an inclusive agenda where the benefits of growth flow through to the wider community in the form of jobs, decent incomes, and rising living standards.

Too many in society have an existence that comprises of loan sharks, zero hours contracts, food banks and poverty. Many people are working multiple jobs on minimum wages and suffering in-work poverty, with few opportunities of improving employment chances. Dependent on in-work benefits, these people are seeing

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themselves being demonised as scroungers by the media. In addition, in-work poverty and income inequality are major contributors to health inequality.

The world of work has changed significantly and many workers are fearful of their employment prospects. George Osborne lauded that new jobs were being created and unemployment was falling, yet these are poor quality, precarious jobs with little long-term prospects. The latest annual report from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation highlighted that insecure, low-paid jobs are leaving record numbers of working families in poverty, with two-thirds of people who found work in the past year taking jobs for less than the Living Wage.

The growing sense of insecurity is having a profound effect on individuals. In the UK last year 50 million prescriptions were issued for antidepressants, and more young men died from suicide than any other cause. This is a sad reflection on the state of society, and a tragedy for the individuals concerned.

UNISON is proud that it has equality at the heart of the union. The commitment to self organisation has built inclusivity and developed an equality agenda which has benefitted all members.

Inequality is not a fringe issue, politicians and governments need to acknowledge and accept that they have to grasp this as a priority. UNISON should be leading the debate on what kind of a society the country needs, with a value base that is linked to sustainable and equitable growth. Furthermore, UNISON's campaigning work on the Living Wage and Ethical Care Charter needs to continue to strength and argue the case for minimum standards that have social benefit.

Ethics, which appears to be absent from the politics of austerity, should be at the centre, helping to truly enable social mobility and economic growth in the 21st century. The Greek election results have shown that there is rising condemnation of austerity measures, and grassroots opposition is permeating throughout Europe, including in Italy and Spain. There is growing opposition to the punishment imposed by a remote elite on working people.

The Government need to acknowledge and accept that inequality is not a fringe issue. It is essential that politicians recognise that nurses, builders, teachers, labourers, hairdressers, shop assistants and service sector workers are as much generators of growth as bankers, investors, businesses and multinational companies. There needs to be a genuine discussion about fair distribution of wealth that allows people to live in dignity.

Conference calls on UNISON to:

- 1) Engage with politicians, academics and economists at all levels to debate structural and economic reforms that tackle growing inequality and rebalance the economy to deliver real social mobility and a fair distribution of wealth;
- 2) Campaign for decent living standards, guaranteed through improved measures to support the unemployed (especially those who are young), prevent homelessness, and lift people out of poverty;

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- 3) Continue to campaign to establish the Living Wage as the National Minimum Wage;
- 4) Continue to campaign for local authorities to sign-up to the Ethical Care Charter.

Northern Region

47. Austerity creates inequality and damages the economy

Conference condemns the UK Government's austerity measures, used to justify slashing public spending and the increased outsourcing and privatisation of public services and welcomes UNISON Scotland's excellent report, "Austerity economics don't add up."

Austerity has resulted in growing inequality across the UK, which condemns the poorest to using food banks to live whilst the richest 1000 have doubled their income to £59 billion since 2009. Think what a difference this money £59,000,000,000 could make to working people's lives if it was redistributed wisely

In 2012-13 more than half of the 480,000 working age adults in Scotland were living in poverty and more than half in homes where at least one adult was in work. Nearly one in five children – 180,000 – were in relative poverty, 59% in a home where at least one adult was working. More and more people are forced to rely on foodbanks.

Such inequality hurts the economy and the £6 billion cuts in Scotland are harming the public services we all rely on, with further cuts still to come.

Conference calls for UNISON to continue its campaign against cuts to welfare and public services and calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to highlight the impact of austerity not just on individuals but on the economy as a whole;
- 2) Work with the TUC, the STUC and the People's Assemblies to press the UK government and the governments of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, to produce active economic and industrial policies aimed at creating full employment, for work that pays enough to ensure a decent standard of living for all; a living rent; a just transition to a low carbon economy; a crackdown on tax avoidance and fair taxation;
- 3) Encourage branches to work with local trades union councils, charities, churches and community groups to get the message out that austerity is bad for local people and bad for local communities;
- 4) Campaign for a moratorium on further public sector job cuts and a programme of long-term investment in housing, infrastructure and green energy by lobbying MPs, MSPs and local councillors;
- 5) Continue to oppose the "false economy" of outsourcing and privatisation of public services through Labour Link;

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- 6) Campaign for an end to council tax freezes which in Scotland has cost more than £2.5 billion and benefits the better off most.

Aberdeenshire

48. The Labour Government

Conference believes that the next Labour Government should carry out the following measures:

- 1) Increase the pay of all public sector workers above the rate of inflation every year during the lifetime of the next Parliament;
- 2) Increase of the national minimum wage to £10 per hour for all workers above the age of 16;
- 3) Restore student grants and the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA);
- 4) Re-nationalise the rail and bus companies, Royal Mail, water and energy. Repeal the Health and Social Care Act and the legislation permitting the establishment of academies, free schools and private finance initiatives (PFI). Refuse to ratify the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP);
- 5) Restore all the cuts in spending on public services made by the Coalition government including the £20 billion cuts in the NHS budget. Increase the funding and powers of the HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) to ensure the collection of the £120 billion of tax avoided and evaded each year;
- 6) Build one million new homes under local council control. Scrap the bedroom tax and reintroduce statutory rent controls;
- 7) Restore the real value of all benefits. Scrap sanctions on benefits, workfare, and the Work Capability Assessment (WCA). Stop outsourcing the administration of benefits. Retain the Independent Living Fund and open it up to new recipients;
- 8) Abolish all anti-trade union laws and introduce legislation to make blacklisting illegal;
- 9) Repeal all anti-immigrant legislation and other anti-immigrant measures introduced by the Coalition;
- 10) Restore the top rate of tax and corporation tax rate to 1979 levels;
- 11) Create one million green jobs.

Conference calls on Labour Link to campaign within the Labour Party for support for these measures.

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*Birmingham UNISON Branch
Leicester City
London Fire & Emergency Planning Authority
Nottinghamshire County
Portsmouth City (L)*

49. The Next Labour Government

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- 11) Create one million green jobs.

Conference calls on Labour Link to campaign within the Labour Party for support for these measures.

Islington UNISON (M)

50. Campaigning Against Profit from Poverty

Conference fully recognises the devastating impact of the Austerity Agenda on our members and our communities. According to the Office of National Statistics 80% of

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new jobs being created are in sectors of the economy which pay an average of £16,640 per annum for 40 hours a week work. There is still a disturbing rise in the casualisation of labour, workers and those seeking work have never had it so bad. It is the workers of this country that have seen their pay packets shrink over the past five years and for many this has resulted in what can only be described as in-work poverty. However whilst they suffer others have been making huge profits during this age of austerity. This conference is calling for a concerted campaign against those who make profit from poverty. On our high streets we find the growth industries pawn shops, pay day loan companies and Rent to Own Stores selling electrical goods at horrific rates on interest. Conference believes we need to do more to name and shame those who operate in this morally bankrupt sector of the economy.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Embark on a national campaign to highlight and prevent profit from poverty and provide branches with the resources to do so;
- 2) Work with politicians at local and national level, community groups and other trade unions to highlight the economic and social issues which lead to people using this sector of the economy.

UNISON Renfrewshire

51. The People's Charter

"The People's Charter" is a campaigning document devised by a commission of trade unionists with the intention of providing a clear alternative to the Austerity Agenda and all the misery that neoliberalism imposes on the people of Britain.

The Charter calls for public control of the banks, together with water, energy and transport, ensuring that there is sustained investment in these services on behalf of their users . It also calls for a fairer tax system, with the wealthy and big business paying their way, investment not cuts to public services and the creation of thousands of new homes and sustainable fairly paid jobs.

The People's Charter represents:

- 1) A fair economy for a fairer Britain;
- 2) More and better jobs;
- 3) Decent homes for all;
- 4) Saving and improving Public Services;
- 5) Fairness and justice;
- 6) A better future for all.

The People's Charter has been endorsed by the TUC and the following trade unions: NUT, RMT, CWU, FBU, NUJ, PCS, BFAWU and POS (Scotland).

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Conference call on the National Executive Council:

- a) To endorse the People's Charter on behalf of UNISON;
- b) Send information on the People's Charter to all branches.

Somerset County

52. Democratic Socialism

In the modern epoch, free market capitalism is responsible for world-wide programmes of privatisation, attacks on workers' jobs, wages and conditions, increasing poverty especially in the less developed countries, environmental destruction, wars without end for whole sections of the world and a massive increase in profits for the few trans-national companies which dominate the world economy.

Never more than now are the failings of capitalism exposed. It is so exposed that even the bosses recognise the crisis. The response of the bosses to give away to the failing system billions of pounds of workers' money is unacceptable. Bailing out bankers and using our money to protect their system is not the way forward for trade unionists and working class people.

Conference believes that there is an economic alternative to free market capitalism based on the common and democratic ownership of the major elements of the economy namely democratic socialism.

Accordingly Conference calls for:

- 1) The nationalisation of all the banks on the basis of democratic public ownership, i.e. run by representatives of banking workers and trade unions, the wider working class, as well as the government. Take them completely out of the hands of the fat cats who made the mess! Compensation should be paid only on the basis of proven need;
- 2) The nationalised banks to offer cheap loans and mortgages for housing and for the planned development of industry and services to stop house repossessions and expand social housing;
- 3) The opening of the books of the major companies that dominate the economy; let popular committees of workers, trade unionists and consumer groups see where the profits have gone and what their financial situation really is and for no job losses;
- 4) The ending of fuel poverty by implementing a windfall tax on the oil and gas companies as a step towards nationalising them;
- 5) A trade union struggle to increase the national minimum wage to £10 per hour without exemptions for young people, in line with TUC policy. The introduction of a sliding scale of wages with automatic increases to cover inflation;

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- 6) The ending of privatisation and for a massive programme of investment to improve public services and to defend public sector jobs and pay.

Accordingly, this meeting calls on the leadership of UNISON to use all means at its disposal to publicise and popularise these issues amongst the membership and the working class generally.

City Of Glasgow Branch

Employment Rights

53. Promoting trade union and employment rights

Conference condemns the continuing assault on trade unions and their ability to defend their members by the Tory-led Coalition, aimed at stripping away the last defence of working people in the UK. The past year has witnessed repeated attacks on employment rights and trade union facility time and activity.

Conference asserts that the ability of trade unions to negotiate, bargain and organise on behalf of their members is fundamental to decent pay, better lives and a more equal society for all. Trade union rights are essential to democracy, whether it is enabling workers to speak at workplace or national level. Conference believes the damage inflicted by attacks on collective bargaining coverage and on employment rights is visible in working people's alienation from parliamentary politics and in an unjust and insecure labour market.

The introduction in Great Britain of fees for employment tribunals in 2013, has, as feared, had a dramatic effect on access to workplace justice. According to the Ministry of Justice's figures, overall Employment Tribunal (ET) claims dropped by 80% in the year following the introduction of fees. The judgement of the High Court in the first judicial review by UNISON accepted that 'the intuitive response is that many workers with legitimate matters to raise before an ET must now be deterred from doing so because of the fees that will be demanded of them before any such claim can be advanced'.

Further evidence showing a 91% drop in sex discrimination claims, and an overall drop in all claims of 80%, highlighted by UNISON in its second claim to the high court was accepted as "striking". Lord Justice Elias anticipated that some workers would have insufficient funds to bring claims. Despite this, UNISON's challenge was dismissed. Conference is proud that UNISON will continue to appeal and fight in the courts against the introduction of fees.

Conference notes that our members in Northern Ireland, though facing savage austerity cuts, have not had the majority of coalition employment rights (such as ET fees, TUPE changes and the increased unfair dismissal qualifying period) measures implemented there.

Attacks on the democratic voice and activity of trade unions, already one of most restricted in Europe, were further curtailed by the Coalition Government with the passage of the Lobbying Act. The Conservative party have threatened the introduction in trade union industrial action ballots of a 50% participation threshold

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together with proposals for restrictions on picketing, a three month time limit after a ballot for strike action and agency worker cover for striking workers. A further proposal would require the backing of 40% of eligible voters for strike action in health, transport, fire services and schools. Conference believes it is the height of cynicism to place obstacles in the way of trade union members participating in ballots through complicated anti-trade union legislation and to then attack the results as undemocratic.

Conference further notes that the Coalition Government's attack on trade union rights and activities nationally has been matched by attacks at local level on facility time. On the back of campaigning by right wing groups such as the 'Tax-Payers' Alliance' and the 'Trade Union Reform Group', the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) issued advice to local authorities in March 2013 advising them to reduce trade union facility time. Conference welcomes research by NatCen Social Research for UNISON which highlighted the valuable role trade union representatives play in public services, enabling meaningful consultation and negotiation within workplaces, improving workplace relations and employers' reputations, early interventions to prevent grievances escalating into more serious problems and saving jobs during restructuring and redundancy processes. Facility time pays dividends for both employers and workers and the DCLG's recommendations are destructive and short-sighted.

Conference believes that political attacks on trade union activities underlines the fundamental importance of strengthening the ability of trade unions to make employment rights and workplace justice a reality in workplaces across the country. If the damage sustained to workers rights is left unchallenged, poverty pay, workplace exploitation and job insecurity will simply become worse.

Conference believes that a positive campaign to develop and strengthen collective bargaining, greater freedom for trade unions to recruit, ballot and organise in workplaces and the repeal of the Lobbying Act is essential to creating a fairer economy and a better deal for workers.

Whatever the result of the 2015 General Election, Conference believes we need a programme to rebuild fair employment through trade union rights and therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with the TUC, STUC, WTUC and ICTU to campaign for a framework of employment rights that promotes collective bargaining, clear consultation rights and trade union organising in Great Britain and Northern Ireland;
- 2) Develop an agenda to increase participation in UNISON industrial action ballots and also to campaign for changes in regulation to allow workplace ballot boxes and online voting;
- 3) Work with branches, service groups, Self Organised Groups and regions to promote a new agenda for collective bargaining and workplace justice;
- 4) Continue to work with the Institute of Employment Rights and the Campaign for Trade Union Freedom.

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National Executive Council

54. Strike Ballot Thresholds

Conference notes that Conservative Party manifesto proposals to impose a minimum turnout (50%) and a minimum threshold of support (40% of all those balloted) would make it nigh on impossible for unions to conduct lawful industrial action in large public service bargaining groups. A 50% turnout would require an 80% yes vote otherwise the ballot would be legally invalid.

Taken together with the imposition of fees to access Employment Tribunals, attacks on facility time for union reps, and removal of DOCAS in some unions, it is clear that the Tories are working towards an end game of destroying trade unionism in Britain's public services.

Conference believes that the union should launch an immediate and sustained media counter-offensive to ensure that UNISON's views on these proposed ballot thresholds are heard, and that the attack on our democratic and human rights is exposed for what it is. Branches are well placed to support a localised media strategy, if template materials such as press releases are provided.

Branches can also encourage members and retired members to write letters to the press highlighting our concerns, and this will be expedited more efficiently through the provision of templates to branches.

Conference therefore urges all appropriate national committees to consider how such a strategy may be put in place.

In particular Conference:

- 1) Calls on the National Executive Council to urgently develop a comprehensive strategy and a high profile campaign designed to maximise opposition to any proposals to impose minimum turnout thresholds and / or minimum support thresholds in industrial action ballots;
- 2) Calls on the National Executive Council to ensure that this issue is taken up as strongly as possible within the TUC;
- 3) Urges the UNISON Labour Link to take this issue up within the Labour Party at all levels.

South East Region

55. Trade Union Rights

Conference notes with alarm the continuing attacks against and erosion of trade union rights as consistently exposed by the Institute of Employment Rights (IER), including the challenge of the employers' group of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to the right to strike as set out in ILO Article 87. It also notes that the potential for protest against anti-trade union measures is being severely curtailed, for example by the Lobbying Act and other limitations on collective expression of opposition and discontent.

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Conference asserts the right of UNISON and its members both separately and jointly with other unions, to freely and democratically represent the interests of its members, to protest against measures that contravene this right and to restore, protect and extend trade union freedoms.

Conference therefore calls on UNISON's National Executive Council to:

- 1) Raise awareness in UNISON of the erosion of trade union rights and rights of protest;
- 2) Support and promote the work of the Institute of Employment Rights;
- 3) Campaign for a repeal of anti trade union legislation and the restoration of trade union freedoms in Britain.

Somerset County

56. Defend Trade Union Rights

Conference condemns the government's attacks on the ability of the civil service union, PCS, to organise, including the removal of "check-off" in part of the civil service and attacks on facility time. This attack is the single biggest attack on a union since Margaret Thatcher targeted the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) thirty years ago.

If the Tories are still in government after the General Election, they are likely to try and step up attacks on the ability of trade unions to organise. They have already indicated they may try to ban strike action in "essential public services" and also raise the threshold for industrial action ballots, making legal industrial action virtually impossible.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Organise a strategy to campaign against these attacks and to include raising awareness of them amongst members. Namely, Conference calls for a strong national campaign that will defend any attack on facility time and 'check off' as well as fight against any proposals that will raise the threshold for industrial action ballots;
- 2) Draw attention to the hypocrisy of the Tory government and their double standards regarding parliamentary elections and strike action ballots and to work with the Labour link to ensure a potential Labour government gives a commitment to defend trade union rights and principles;
- 3) Encourage local branches to send messages of support and solidarity to PCS branches, who are at the forefront of the current attack on trade union rights.

Nottingham City UNISON (L Gov)

57. Union Busting

Conference notes:

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- 1) That a number of Housing associations, Charities and private employers who provide public services are openly hostile to trade unions, carry out American style anti union practices and refuse to recognise trade unions;
- 2) The right of free assembly and collective bargaining is a fundamental human right enshrined in international law. Any failure by any employer to honour these rights with regard to trade unions means they do not respect human rights;
- 3) We note that “not for profit” or “third sector” employers are nominally registered charities and should share a social ethos with regard to good governance and respecting human rights;
- 4) Public Service Providers who do not treat their staff with respect or dignity will not treat their clients or residents with respect either;
- 5) Replacing free and democratic trade unions with internal “staff associations” is historically a central plank of the philosophy called “Corporatism” which has direct links with far right political groups in the UK and abroad;
- 6) All public service employers are dependent on public procurement and funding, direct or indirect. While at the same time many pay their senior managers huge amounts of money;
- 7) Many supporters of national charities would be horrified to find out that these charities refuse to recognise or engage with independent trade unions;
- 8) There is a huge reputational and financial risk to employers who engage in such anti-trade union busting.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Actively support and help campaign against union busting by Public Service providers;
- b) Draw up a campaign plan on how to organise in Public Service Providers that we do not currently have trade union recognition;
- c) Call upon National Labour Link to examine whether local Councils and a future Labour Government should debar any Public Service Provider that does not recognise trade unions from access to public funding or procurement;
- d) Call upon the Government to hold an independent public enquiry into the governance and democratic deficit of employers who provide public services.

Housing Associations Branch (M)

58. Forever Autumn and Austerity?

Conference notes:

- 1) £35bn of public sector cuts have already happened and the Autumn Statement 2014 means another £55bn of cuts are to take place by 2020. Paul Johnson, Institute for Fiscal Studies Director, in an interview with the BBC 4th December

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2014 talking about how this would translate into public spending said it would mean, "spending cuts on a colossal scale ... taking total government spending to its lowest level as a proportion of national income since before the last war." The effect on Local Government is particularly stark with the Municipal Journal also stating: "We are only two fifths of the way through public sector downsizing, and if health and education are protected, the reality is local public services will not exist in the way we have known them for last 40 years.";

- 2) Since then Barnet and Bromley Councils have started a race to see which can be the Council quickest to outsource all of its services leaving a hub of just around 300-400 staff members to manage the contracts and Northamptonshire County Council announced it will also be outsourcing 95% of its workforce;
- 3) Other Councils have announced further massive cuts to their budgets such as Camden: £73million; Cardiff: £32million; Manchester £60million;
- 4) Between 2010 and 2012 alone 200,000 jobs were lost in Local Government and all remaining workers have faced pay cuts of 18% as terms and conditions have not kept pace with inflation;
- 5) The Labour Party has so far made no commitment to reversing the Central Government cuts proposals in Local Government.

Conference believes:

- a) The cuts in Local Government, if implemented will have a knock-on effect for other services such as Health and Education in terms of an increase in demand as the needs of vulnerable people in our community are increasingly unmet by local services meaning their health and wellbeing suffers;
- b) The experience of Local Government workers so far indicates the predictions for the future of Local Government is as outlined by those forecasted by Paul Johnson and the Municipal Journal;
- c) Mass outsourcing is one ideological response to the massive cuts imposed by Central Government and signifies the end of Local Government;
- d) Councils progressing with mass outsourcing are effectively coming out of National Pay Bargaining;
- e) Our union and its organisational existence is directly threatened by the scale of the cuts;
- f) Our union believes in democratic control of local services;
- g) The challenge has been thrown down in the name of "Austerity" and it is for all members of the Trade Union movement to demand a change, "doing the same" is no longer an option;
- h) Without substantial industrial action now and in the immediate future, Local Government will cease to exist in its current format.

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Conference resolves to:

- i) Actively promote a culture of “it’s right to strike” across the union;
- ii) Positively and proactively support all branches registering legitimate trade disputes and seeking to ballot their members for lawful industrial action in every way possible and promoting those branches which do move to take lawful industrial action;
- iii) Where possible encourage the coordination of lawful strike action across the union and with other unions.

Barnet Local Government

59. The Right to Strike

Conference notes in the January 10th issue, The Independent reports that under plans unveiled by the Conservative Party public sector workers in key sectors such as health, education and transport will only be able to strike if a ballot is supported by 40 per cent of eligible union members .

The Independent adds that further plans include ending a ban in using agency workers to cover strikers, imposing a three-month time limit after a ballot for strike action to take place and curbing picketing.

The measures proposed will form part of the party’s manifesto, to be implemented should they win this May's General Election.

Conference fully supports the letter of protest published in the Guardian by Labour MP John McDonnell and several trade union leaders.

Conference fully supports Frances O’Grady, the TUC General Secretary’s reaction: “The Conservatives know that this threshold will effectively end the right to strike in the public sector. No democracy elsewhere in the world has this kind of restriction on industrial action. It is a democratic outrage.”

Conference believes that the threat against the right to strike is the logical consequence of the refusal by successive governments to repeal Thatcher’s anti trade union laws despite the demand regularly expressed by the TUC Congress.

It is also part and parcel of a general offensive against the right to strike which was started on the international level when in 2012 at the ILO, for the first time since 1927, the Employers’ Group refused to participate in the examination of cases of violation of Convention No.87. arguing that “the right to strike (...) has no legal basis whatsoever in Convention No. 87”.

This is in order to further oppose trade union action. In reality Article 3 of ILO Convention No. 87 stipulates that “Workers’ (...) organisations shall have the right (...) to formulate their programmes”, and Article 10 guarantees recognition of the right to organise “for furthering and defending the interests of workers”.

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When the right to strike is under threat it is the existence of the trade unions which is being threatened.

Conference resolves to campaign within the trade union and labour movement to repeal all anti trade union laws and for the right to strike.

Islington UNISON (M)

Pensions

60. Increase in the basic state pension

Conference is very concerned that the Basic State Pension (BSP) has remained below the poverty level for many years. In April 2014, it was increased to £113.10 per week for a single pensioner, a rise of £2.95 per week. The National Pensioners Convention statistic for the poverty level is £175. The deficit of £64.90 is appalling! The BSP in the UK is still one of the lowest in Europe (4th from bottom) although we are the 7th richest nation in the world!

If the Retail Price Index (RPI) had still been in place, the increase would have been 3.2% instead of the September 2013 Consumer Price Index (CPI) rise of 2.7% (£2.95). For the calculation of CPI, the 'basket' of goods and services used should be more appropriate to pensioners and should not be a calculation for general use. The measure of inflation should return to RPI for up rating all pensions.

Means-testing pensioners for the Pension Credit Guarantee is continuing and for a single pensioner it rose from £145.40 per week to £148.35, an increase of £2.95. This indicates that the Government thinks that £148.35 is the amount pensioners need to live on.

The new Pension Bill became law on 14 May 2014 and means that the new BSP will not be less than £148.40 per week, the actual amount will be set in the autumn of 2015 and will be paid to 'new' pensioners. The present BSP is £113.10 and is £35.30 below this amount and CPI will be based on September 2014 inflation for the rise in the present 2014 BSP to be paid in 2015, it probably won't be more than £3. Therefore, present pensioners will receive a BSP of, say, £116.10 but the 'new' pensioners will receive £148.40! How unfair is that?

Therefore, Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign urgently for an increase in the Basic State Pension to at least the poverty level of £175 a week for a single pensioner and £325 for couples;
- 2) Campaign for a return to annual increases in the Basic State Pension based on the Retail Price Index (RPI) or the annual increase in average earnings or an increase sufficient to ensure that the Basic State Pension is not lower than the poverty level, whichever is the greater;
- 3) Take positive action to make our concerns known to the Government through Labour Link, national and regional branches of the Trades Union Congress (TUC), local trades councils, by lobbying MPs, and by supporting the National Pensioners Convention and the Scottish Pensioners' Forum in their campaigns;

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- 4) Publicise and report on progress to regions and branches through all appropriate communication channels, including the UNISON website, U Magazine, In-Focus and E-Focus.

National Retired Members' Committee

International

61. The rights of migrant workers in Qatar

Conference notes that in 2010 the football world governing body, FIFA, awarded Qatar the 2022 World Cup. Conference further notes that Qatar is not a traditional 'footballing nation' and the country experiences soaring temperatures during the summer months which could have dreadful consequences for both players and fans.

Qatar is possibly the richest country in the world per capita. It has a population of 2.2 million people but only 278k are Qatari citizens: the remainder are 'expatriates' or migrant workers for whom it is almost impossible to become citizens. Hundreds of thousands of these migrant workers are working to build the infrastructure of the World Cup, including a new city, Lusail, which will be the venue for the final.

Because of this unprecedented construction programme, hundreds of thousands additional workers are needed to ensure the infrastructure is completed by 2022. Many of the construction workers come from Nepal, India, Bangladesh and the Philippines as well as other countries dependant on remittances from their migrant populations.

Conference notes that since Qatar won the right to stage the World Cup nearly 2,000 workers have already died. The global trade union federation, the ITUC, estimates that as many as 4,000 workers will die before a game is played. Qatar refutes the figures stating that heart attacks and cardiac arrest are deaths due to 'natural causes' but the fact that the average age of those dying in this manner is 22 years, points to the conditions that workers are forced to endure. They work extremely long hours on building sites in soaring temperatures, and many of the living quarters are overcrowded, insanitary and lack any reliable form of air conditioning.

Conference believes that this World Cup provides an opportunity for trade unions to shine a light on Qatar's treatment of migrant workers who are employed not only in the construction industry but across all other sectors including health and education.

Employment contracts in Qatar are based on the Kafala system of sponsorship, which effectively ties a worker to the employer. Should workers experience problems such as changes to the agreed contract, less (or no) pay than was originally offered or be subject to physical or mental abuse, they could find themselves being unable to leave the country if the employer refuses to sign their exit papers. The ITUC has called for the system to be abolished. The government of Qatar has promised to reform the law around Kafala, and has introduced some reforms but they are not being rigorously enforced, meaning thousands of workers have no protection against unscrupulous employers, and little hope of redress from the authorities.

Conference is aware that modern slavery, including forced and bonded labour, is increasing both in the UK and across the world, and most of those who suffer are

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migrant workers who move from their homes with the promise of a job with decent pay and conditions. Anti Slavery International and human rights' organisations such as Amnesty International are working with trade unions and others to expose and stop the abuse of migrant workers in countries such as Qatar.

Conference notes that the TUC has launched a campaign called Playfair Qatar to engage football fans in calling for Qatar to respect workers' rights especially the rights of workers building the infrastructure for the World Cup. Conference further notes that UNISON is supporting the campaign, and encouraging branches and regions to get involved.

Qatar's phenomenal growth includes invitations to international educational institutions to open up campuses in the emirate. Conference also notes the use of subcontracting of services in Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Doha, where University College London (UCL) has a campus. The ITUC have alleged that forced labour is being used in some instances in Hamad Bin Khalifa University as some migrant workers who were employed as cleaners, gardeners and auxiliary staff had suffered appalling living conditions, the withholding of passports, lower than promised wages as well as having had to pay huge agency fees to secure their contracts.

Conference believes that British higher education institutions (HEIs) who have overseas' campuses in Qatar should ensure that workers providing services to their institution, whether or not they are directly employed by the HEI, should be subject to the same terms and conditions of employment as directly-employed staff.

Conference notes that the current focus on Qatar in the build up to the 2022 World Cup is on the alleged corruption in awarding Qatar the World Cup and the soaring temperatures that players and fans will experience during the competition. Conference believes that the focus should also be on the violation of the rights of migrant workers working in the emirate as no sporting event is worth the loss of so many young lives.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Endorse the TUC campaign to encourage football fans in this country to engage in the Playfair Qatar campaign;
- 2) Encourage branches and regions to affiliate to Anti Slavery International and Amnesty International UK;
- 3) Support organisations, such as Anti Slavery International, who are working to eradicate modern-day slavery;
- 4) Work with the Universities and Colleges Union (UCU), other campus trade unions and the National Union of Students (NUS) to call on UCL and any other British HEIs to ensure that contractors providing services on their campuses at home and abroad respect workers' rights;
- 5) Work with the Higher Education Services Group Executive and the National Health and Safety Committee to vigorously campaign for the abolition of the

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Kafala system and the ratification of International Labour Organisation (ILO) conventions protecting workers' rights in Qatar.

National Executive Council

62. Supporting the campaign for rights and democracy in Swaziland

Conference recognises the contribution UNISON has made in promoting rights and democracy in southern Africa. UNISON's support goes back to the days of the anti-apartheid era, and, in more recent times in supporting trade unions to build their capacity, mount campaigns in defence of public services, and supporting unions in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Conference notes the ongoing support UNISON offers sister unions through the UNISON International Development Fund (UIDF), and recognises the positive outcomes from this, including the building of links between our union and unions across southern Africa.

Conference is aware that one country in the region, Swaziland, has not transitioned to democracy, and people are still denied their basic rights including the right for workers to freely organise.

Swaziland is Africa's last remaining absolute monarchy. Its power and resources remain almost exclusively in the hands of a small unelected elite around the king, protected by a vast security sector, while two thirds of the population live in absolute poverty. Fundamental human rights, the rule of law and democracy do not exist.

Conference notes that women in Swaziland are subjected to particularly high levels of discrimination. They are considered minors under the law, many are denied the right to own property and there is a lack of legislation to protect them against the high levels of domestic violence and rape. Conference further notes that unemployment in Swaziland is around 40% with the figure for young people being much higher.

Political parties in Swaziland are banned and trade union organising is heavily restricted. Trade unions face harassment, particularly when they call for rights deemed by the state to be political. The Trade Union Congress of Swaziland (TUCOSWA) has been deregistered by government since 2012, effectively making them a banned organisation. Numerous activists have been arrested and imprisoned under draconian laws designed to silence any opposition to the status quo.

Conference acknowledges the calls from Swazi trade unions and civil society for the establishment of a multi-party democracy to secure better rights for workers and helping to eradicate poverty. To that end UNISON has supported sister unions in Swaziland, including NAPSAWU, which organises public service workers, and SWADNU, which is the democratic nurses' union. Conference is aware that both unions suffer restrictions. The authorities have refused to register either union under these names, and both are only recognised under their old names.

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Conference is aware that the situation in Swaziland remains greatly overlooked by most of the international community, and supports calls from TUCOSWA, its affiliates and the Swaziland United Democratic Front for the international community to put more pressure on Swaziland to move to a democratic system of government, to repeal the draconian legislation currently in place, and to promote and protect the rights of all its citizens.

Conference believes that Britain and the Commonwealth are in unique positions to influence the government and king of Swaziland, and agrees with TUCOSWA that the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Malta in November 2015 presents a great opportunity to raise the issue of Swaziland with other Commonwealth members.

Conference is aware that in the run up to CHOGM Action for Southern Africa (ACTSA) is campaigning to raise awareness of the situation in Swaziland and supporting the calls of, and working with, Swazi trade unions, the Commonwealth Trade Union Group (CTUG) and Swazi civil society to refer Swaziland to the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) for persistent violations of the Commonwealth Charter.

Conference notes that UNISON is already supporting ACTSA's Swaziland campaign which includes a portable photographic exhibition, a speaking tour by a leading Swazi trade unionist, published briefing papers and online actions. Conference believes that UNISON branches and regions should actively engage in the campaign in much the same way as it proudly supported the anti-apartheid campaign forty years ago.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to support the calls of Swazi trade unions for democracy, human rights and the repeal of draconian laws which restrict trade unions;
- 2) Engage with the Action for Southern Africa campaign on Swaziland;
- 3) Strengthen the links between UNISON and unions and pro-democracy groups in Swaziland;
- 4) Encourage regions to stage the photographic exhibition and to invite speakers from Swaziland to address regional and workplace meetings;
- 5) Call on all regions and branches to affiliate to ACTSA;
- 6) Encourage MPs to take an active interest in Swaziland, to ask questions in the House in the run up to CHOGM, and to actively participate in the ACTSA campaign;
- 7) Encourage UNISON members to raise Swaziland with their MPs/MSPs/MLAs/AMs;
- 8) Encourage members in the devolved nations to invite visiting Swazi activists to speak to their respective parliament, senate or assembly;

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- 9) Work specifically with the National Black Members' Committee and National Women's Committee to raise awareness of Swaziland among members.

National Executive Council

63. Solidarity with the struggle of Kobani People for peace

Conference notes:

- 1) The human tragedy resulting from the brutal wars and invasions of towns and communities in Iraq and Syria during 2014 by forces under the banner of the terrorist 'Islamic State' (IS);
- 2) The shocking scenes and horrendous reports from the Kurdish town of Kobani (Ein el Arab) in Northern Syria, which was for months besieged by the army of the "Islamic State" in autumn 2014;
- 3) The heroic resistance put up by the people of Kobani in the face of the much stronger and better-armed forces of the 'Islamic State'. For weeks they fought street by street battles with the terrorist invaders, while the outside world daily watched the murder of the town's inhabitants;
- 4) That the inhabitants of Kobani, amongst them thousands of young women, bravely defended their town using what rudimentary arms were available to them against the heavy weaponry of the 'IS';
- 5) That tens of thousands of Kobani inhabitants have left the town and are seeking refuge in neighbouring countries;
- 6) The eventual success of the people of Kobani in defeating the invading forces;
- 7) The vast devastation of Kobani and its infrastructure as a result of months of heavy bombing by the IS and the street by street battle to defend the town.

Conference further notes that:

- a) The tragic events in Kobani were the result of the policy of foreign intervention in the countries of the Middle East, irresponsible support for terrorist organisations and the direct consequence of the militarisation of the Middle East;
- b) The emergence of ISIS and its announcement of the Islamic Caliphate in Iraq and Syria, is a new and dangerous development that could push the Middle East to escalating war and military conflict and instability;
- c) These fundamentalist forces, with tacit support from dictatorial regimes such as those in Qatar and Saudi Arabia, directly threaten civil liberties and secular values;
- d) There has been worldwide expressions of solidarity by working people with the people of Kobani and their resistance in the face of the terrorist onslaught.

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Conference, while declaring its unequivocal commitment to peace and opposition to any new war in the Middle East, instructs the incoming National Executive Council:

- i) To raise the issue of practical solidarity with the people of Kobani, with the TUC, the Foreign Office and all relevant bodies;
- ii) To consider organising a fact-finding and solidarity mission to Kobani - in cooperation with other trade unions and the TUC - to discuss with trade unions and civic organisations in Kobani the best means of offering practical solidarity, support, twinning activities and projects;
- iii) To consider what practical measures might best support the efforts of the people of Kobani in rebuilding their communities.

South West Region

64. Rojava

Conference salutes the defenders of Kobane in the region of Syria known as Rojava and welcomes their success in repelling the attacks on the city by ISIS. In doing so we recognise that the struggle against ISIS continues and that the people of Syria, Iraq, Kurdistan and the region generally face a lengthy struggle against an organisation that believes genocide, rape, enslavement and beheadings are legitimate methods to enforce their particular poisonous philosophy on people and to consolidate their control over the population.

Conference recognises that the rise of ISIS and other groups has been facilitated by the disastrous policies of the US and UK in relation to the Middle East, and in particular the Iraqi war, and that any suggestion that US and UK troops should be deployed back to Iraq or Syria should be opposed.

Conference welcomes the initiatives by UNISON branches, regions and the International Committee in working with Kurdish groups to raise awareness of the issues in the region and to raise funds for the refugees from ISIS attacks.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Express its support for the people of Rojava who are trying to create a non-sectarian, gender equal and democratic society whilst resisting the attacks of ISIS;
- 2) Calls on the UK government to pressurise the Turkish government to allow aid to reach Rojava to allow the people to defend themselves and rebuild cities like Kobane and numerous other towns and villages;
- 3) Support the relief work for refugees from the struggle against ISIS in Kurdistan, Turkey and Iraq including the work by trade unions in Northern Kurdistan/South East Turkey who have mobilised a huge voluntary effort to provide humanitarian and medical relief for the Yazidi and Kobane refugees often in the face of opposition from the Turkish state;

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- 4) Establish direct links with trade unions, women's organisation and other civic groups in Kurdistan, Turkey, Syria and Iraq who are involved in this work and to encourage visits to and from the region by trade unionists.

South Lanarkshire UNISON

65. Yarmouk Refugee Camp

Conference is alarmed at the destruction of the Yarmouk Palestinian Refugee Camp in Damascus, Syria. Due to its size Yarmouk is the capital of the Palestinian diaspora, and once hosted approximately 250,000 Palestinian refugees as well as Iraqi refugees and internally displaced Syrians.

Due to the current situation in Syria conditions in the remnants of the camp have continued to unravel at a harrowing rate, with residents caught in the middle of a conflict not of their making.

More than 18,000 people are living under blockade with devastating shortages of food and medicines, which has already caused 125 people to die of starvation. Last year it was reported that food packages had not been delivered for ten days, with Syrian authorities blocking humanitarian supplies over the Easter period, resulting in women dying in childbirth for lack of medical care and incidents of malnutrition among infants.

United Nations Relief and Works Agency recently announced that it only managed to distribute fewer than 700 parcels over the course of the entire month of December 2014, which does not meet the minimum needs. Emergency assistance and increased political pressure from the rest of the world is essential.

Conference notes that UNISON Northern and Greater London Regions have worked to support the Jafra Foundation (formerly the Jafra Palestinian Youth Centre) in providing much need resources to the people of Yarmouk.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Contact branches in order to highlight the situation in Yarmouk;
- 2) Ask branches to link with the Jafra Foundation in order to support their humanitarian work where possible.

Newcastle City

66. Solidarity with Palestine

Conference hopes that a lasting ceasefire between the Israeli Government and Palestinian Organisations can be established, but recognises that this will not happen or be sufficient unless the illegal siege and occupation are ended.

UNISON welcomes Palestinian attempts to establish a unity government and urges the UK Government and the EU to support and encourage this development.

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Conference expresses alarm at the United Nations (UN) assessment that since the 7 July 2014, and the latest, ceasefire nearly 2,500 Palestinian, mainly civilian, and 67 Israelis, three of whom were civilians, have been killed, and 9,986 Palestinians injured.

Conference deplore the attacks on UN facilities, including the attack on 3 August 2014 resulting in 9 deaths and 27 injuries and notes UN assessment of 12 August 2014 listing hospitals, clinics, United National Relief and Works Agency (UNWRA) installations, schools and mosques that have been damaged or destroyed.

International law states that “parties to a conflict are prohibited to target civilians”. The UK Government is urged to support Palestinians in referring violations to the International Criminal Court.

Conference believes that the lack of a proper and meaningful response from the British government, EU and UN has been unacceptable and recognises that it is going to be necessary to step up the campaign for a free Palestine.

Since the ceasefire last autumn, the Israeli government has rapidly escalated its aggressive policy of settlement building in particular in East Jerusalem and the occupied territories. This action is a flagrant disregard of international law. This illegal action demands a robust response from the UN, UK and EU.

As a first step, Conference demands that the British Government and the EU immediately end all arms trade, and all military-industrial collaboration, with Israel (that has been or could be used or tested in breach of international law). This should be supported by campaigning for those companies that are involved in industries supporting Israel’s military industry to end their complicity.

Conference welcomes the 13 October 2014 vote of the British Parliament overwhelmingly in favour of recognising Palestine as a state. It further welcomes those other European countries which have similarly voted for the recognition of Palestine. However, Conference regrets that on 30 December 2014, at the UN Security Council, a resolution calling for the establishment of a Palestinian state failed to attract sufficient support including an abstention by the UK Government.

Further, Conference congratulates UNISON branches, regions and the national union for its support so far to the humanitarian appeal from Medical Aid for Palestine (MAP) and calls on all branches and regions and the national union to continue to support MAP’s humanitarian work.

Conference notes that discussions with some regions and sister unions have taken place around the establishment of the ‘Institute of Knowledge and Socialist Thought’ in Ramallah. The Institute is a training establishment founded by a group of trade union leaders, academics and political leaders in Palestine. Its purpose is to develop workers’ representatives, especially women, in developing and shaping their future in workplaces and communities. The founders of the initiative recognise the importance of working in partnership with trade unions in the UK and Europe.

Conference supports this important initiative and recognises the value of building trade union activist capacity within Palestine. Conference welcomes the generous

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support from some regions and branches towards the initiative and calls on other branches and regions as well as the union nationally to support the initiative by offering practical and financial support.

North West Region

67. The Middle East

Conference notes the acute danger of escalating conflicts in the greater Middle East and the threats posed to civilian populations and to civil rights and secular values. The activities of Islamic fundamentalist and sectarian groups and their violent military campaigns are not only directed against other sections of society based on religious and ethnic identity, they also aim at regime change, fragmentation of society and redrawing the map of the region. This has facilitated the reconfiguration of US policies in the Middle East, aimed at securing its vital interests and those of its allies.

In the overall context, this gives rise to grave concern about the US “New Middle East Plan”, particularly with reference to the future of Libya, Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Conference considers that the policies adopted by NATO and the Western Powers have contributed very significantly to the current crisis by:

- 1) Tacit support for the state of Israel in its refusal to withdraw to the June 1967 boundaries in line with UN resolutions and the continuing supply of arms and financial assistance;
- 2) Military interventions in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya designed to reconfigure countries politically in the Western interests and particularly those of global companies and the US Plan for a “New Middle East”;
- 3) Providing extensive financial and military support for armed Islamic groups in Syria whose operations have ruined extensive areas of Syria and created instability and provided space for terrorist groups such as ISIS and Al-nusra fronts;
- 4) Military and political support for dictatorial regimes in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and United Arab Emirate.

The emergence of Al Qaeda and Jabhat al-Nusra and now the establishment of ISIS and its announcement of the Islamic Caliphate in Iraq and Syria, are qualitatively new developments that seek to take back the whole region to the Middle Ages. These fundamentalist forces, with tacit support from dictatorial regimes such as those in Qatar and Saudi Arabia, directly threaten civil liberties and secular values. These forces display illiberal and regressive cultural, political, social views and agenda which impact negatively on the social and political life in the countries of the Middle East and also have serious and fatal ramifications in countries as far afield as in Europe and North America.

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Conference therefore opposes any further military interventions in the Middle East and calls on the incoming National Executive Council instead to support initiatives and campaigns for:

- a) An end to all foreign interventions in the Middle East and instead active support for the implementation of the UN resolutions aimed at conflict resolution and an end to occupations;
- b) Full implementation of UN resolutions on Palestine and the recognition of the Palestinian state;
- c) A massive programme of civilian aid for the war-torn countries of the Middle East, an end to the economic sanctions against Iran and Syria that principally penalise the civilian populations and reconstruction assistance for Iraq, Libya and Afghanistan;
- d) The promotion of peace, human and democratic rights, trade union rights and social justice in the countries of the Middle East.

Somerset County

68. Justice for Palestine - Stop Arms Sales to Israel

Conference notes that Israeli continues a vicious onslaught against the Palestinians - a ground invasion, air raids and assaults from the sea target civilians.

Conference demands the attacks on the Palestinians stop immediately, that the siege of Gaza is lifted, and call for sanctions against Israel.

The British government is complicit in Israel's massacres of the Palestinians by selling weapons. A government report on arms last year revealed 380 licences to export military equipment to Israel worth nearly \$8 billion.

All arms sales to Israel must cease now. There can be no justice and peace without freedom and self-determination for the Palestinian people

Conference also resolves:

- 1) To re-affirm our opposition to all forms of discrimination including anti-Semitism and Islamophobia;
- 2) To call and coordinate local civic organisations to fly the Palestinian Flag for one day in memory of over 400 children that have died in Gaza;
- 3) Use the resources of our union to divest pension funds from companies complicit with the occupation, settlements and wall;
- 4) To reaffirm our support for anti war activities and make a donation to Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) and Stop the War Coalition;

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- 5) That the union plays an active role to support the campaigning of the Boycott, Disinvestment and Sanctions movement where it is in line with union policy.

Islington UNISON (M)

69. The Bhopal Disaster 30 years later

Conference notes:

- 1) That a Scottish Trade Union Delegation to Bhopal participated in events marking the 30th Anniversary of the gas leak disaster of 1984 for which Union Carbide was responsible;
- 2) That Dow Chemical Company (which now owns Union Carbide) has continued to avoid accountability and evades legal liability;
- 3) That the people of Bhopal are still struggling for justice, adequate compensation, clean water, appropriate health care, employment, pensions and human dignity.

Conference resolves:

- a) To continue and further develop links with the International Campaign for Justice in Bhopal, the Bhopal Medical Appeal and Scottish Friends of Bhopal;
- b) To exert pressure on UK, Indian and US governments to take action to bring Dow Chemical to accept responsibility for the disaster;
- c) To exert pressure on the Indian government to provide adequate health care, employment opportunities and pensions for people affected by the disaster;
- d) To encourage trade union branches and individual trade union members to support the Bhopal Medical Appeal in its work to provide health and rehabilitation care in Bhopal.

Conference calls upon UNISON directly and through TUC to:

- i) Seek a meeting with the Indian Consul General, the Minister responsible for International Development, and relevant spokespeople from parties represented in Parliament, to support the demands of the survivors' movement;
- ii) Write to the representative of Dow in the UK to express the concerns of Conference at the company's continuing denial and avoidance of accountability for the actions of Union Carbide;
- iii) Work with the TUC, STUC, ICTU and Cymru/Wales TUC to convene a conference/ workshop of affiliated trade unions and relevant religious and third sector organisations to discuss practical issues of solidarity such as those listed in this motion.

Scotland Region

70. Philippines - trade, labour rights and migration

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Conference notes that UNISON's support for union organising projects and trade union rights in the Philippines has strongly helped its success in recruiting and organising Filipino migrants in our public services. UNISON has probably the largest Filipino membership of any trade union in Europe. Currently, it is estimated that we have over 10,000 Filipino members and the potential for recruiting many more. There is a need both to step up UNISON's work with sister unions in the Philippines and to strengthen the link and working partnership with the Filipino community organisations in the UK as a way to help us further build our membership among Filipino workers.

Conference notes that economic globalisation depends on the exploitation of poorer countries by global corporations and on the export of cheap labour around the world. One of the largest foreign investors in the Philippines is the United Kingdom, with a combined net foreign direct and net portfolio investments of \$12 billion (£7.8 billion) in 2010. Foreign investment is often accompanied by gross human and labour rights' violations, especially in areas where access to natural resources, including water, and minerals causes conflict between local people and multi-national companies.

Conference is concerned to note that, in the period 2010 to 2014, human rights organisations in the Philippines reported 204 extrajudicial killings and 21 enforced disappearances, 16 of whom were trade unionists. These included Carlos Rodriguez, the president of the Philippines Water District Union, who was summarily executed because of his union's campaign against the proposed privatisation of water services in the rural areas of the Philippines.

Conference also notes that the Philippines is one of the worst victims of climate change. The UN World Risk report in 2012 identified the Philippines as the third most at risk from climate change due to the aggressive destruction of its natural water, mineral and forest resources. In 2013 Typhoon Haiyan the strongest ever recorded storm killed almost 7,000 people and left millions homeless. One of our Filipino members in Eastern region and his family were killed and many others lost their family members. UNISON members responded with an extraordinary level of generosity in donations for relief work.

Conference notes that Filipino members in UNISON have also used our work on these issues to organise and engage a large number of Filipino members to become active in UNISON. Many of our Filipino members are also worried about their job security due to tightening immigration controls, and many are discouraged by their employers from accessing their rights at work and from joining a trade union. Despite this they are eager to join a union to fight for their rights.

Poverty, human rights abuses, climate change and a government policy of exporting labour have led to Filipinos being one of the largest global migrant workforces, including in the UK and particularly in UK public services. Filipino workers are a potential growing force for union organising in UNISON.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Make the Philippines a major part of UNISON's international work by stepping up its effort to support trade unions and community organisations in the Philippines,

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fighting union repression and campaigning to protect the environment and natural resources;

- 2) Continue to recruit and organise Filipino migrants into the union through the regions and branches and to strengthen links with Filipino community organisations in the UK through the UNISON Filipino Activist Network;
- 3) Work with Labour Link, and relevant self-organised groups in UNISON to raise the profile of human and labour rights' issues in the Philippines with British MPs and policy makers;
- 4) Continue to support the work of CHRP (Campaign for Human Rights in the Philippines), Kanlungan, alliance of Filipino organisations and Amnesty International, and encourage branches to affiliate and work closely with these organisations.

Eastern Region

71. Kashmir

Conference notes that the issue of Kashmir remains an outstanding issue of the UN Security Council almost 67 years after the resolution of 13th August 1948 which declared the right of the people of the state of Jammu Kashmir to self-determination. Despite this the state remains divided by India and Pakistan.

Since the first resolution the UN has adopted various further resolutions on the issue but it remains unresolved. During the last 67 years India and Pakistan have been at war with each other and have also acquired nuclear weapons adding to the danger of this conflict.

Another consequence of this conflict is that both countries are spending huge amounts of money on military capabilities while one third of the population of the world lives below the poverty lines with limited access to education, healthcare and clean drinking water facilities.

Since 1990 after an uprising in the areas under Indian administered Kashmir about 80,000 people have lost their lives, many have been disabled for life and about 10,000 people still remain unaccounted for whilst Amnesty International reports that several unmarked graves have been found.

Conference recognises that two million British people of Kashmiri Indian and Pakistani heritage now live in this country and many will be members of our union. It therefore resolves to support the right of the people of Jammu Kashmir to self-determination and to this end to:

- 1) Raise the issue with the Foreign Office to seek a free and fair plebiscite in Kashmir for a permanent resolution of this long term conflict that carries the potential of disrupting global peace;

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- 2) To raise the issue at the TUC and with appropriate international union organisations;
- 3) Help to publicise the issue through an article in U magazine.

Burnley

72. Cambodia

Cambodia's multi million dollar garment export industry dominates the \$1.7 trillion fashion market and supplies many of the UK High Street shops.

Its immense profits rest on a low wage economy where 90% of its workers are women.

There is phenomenon in Cambodian factories whereby hundreds of workers are fainting at work.

They are suffering from malnutrition, overwork and bad conditions.

In 2014 the minimum wage was \$100.

It has been calculated that a worker in Cambodia needs a living wage of \$200 per month.

In late 2013 and early 2014 Cambodian workers staged protests demanding the minimum wage be raised from \$100 per month to \$177.

The protests were met with brutal suppression and 5 workers were shot dead and several leaders and activists were jailed.

Some leaders remain on bail conditions which prevent them meeting with other trade union leaders or participating in public meetings.

Although the Cambodian Government have increased the minimum wage to \$128, this remains woefully below what trade unions demand.

Conference believes everyone with a stake in the garment industry has a responsibility to improve working conditions and that as both trade unionists and consumers we should be fully behind campaigns supporting garment workers, not just in Cambodia, but globally.

Labour Behind the Label is a UK based organisation which supports garment workers across the globe to improve their working conditions. It aims to:

- 1) Raise public awareness;
- 2) Pressurise companies to take responsibility for workers rights;

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- 3) Support workers in their struggles for decent working conditions;
- 4) Campaign for Government to take responsibility;
- 5) This Conference supports these aims and recognises the vital role that Labour Behind the Label has in promoting and achieving these aims.

Conference therefore agrees that we should encourage all regions and branches to:

- a) Affiliate to Labour Behind the Label;
- b) Invite a speaker from Labour Behind the Label.

Wolverhampton General Branch

73. Solidarity with Colombian Human Rights Defenders

Whilst the current peace negotiations are very much welcomed, it is important for us to remember that Colombia is not a post-conflict state, despite the portrayal of the mainstream media. The assassinations of trade union and social movement leaders have not only continued, in fact they are starting to increase. In the first 6 months of 2013, 37 human rights defenders were assassinated in Colombia, the highest 6-month toll for a decade.

The port town of Buenaventura has seen a massive increase in violence in the run up to Colombia signing the US Free Trade Agreement, as paramilitary groups attempt to seize control of the new ports being built in preparation of the increase in trade. By ratifying the EU-Colombia agreement the European community has also failed to condemn these wide spread human rights abuses, which are frequently caused by the neoliberal pursuit of profitable resources regardless of the impact on communities.

Conference reaffirms its continued support to the work of organisations such as War on Want and Justice for Colombia in speaking out against human rights abuses in Colombia, and campaigning to raise awareness of trade union and social movement leaders who receive regular death threats.

In UNISON Northern Region, we have maintained our long history of supporting projects working with organisations within the south-west Cauca region of Colombia. These include women's capacity building project working with the Corteros' sugar cane communities; developing communication capacity with Sintraunicol (education union); supporting annual Women's Assembly, and working with Human Rights NGOs such as NOMADESC.

We are also engaging in a two-year Political Education and Organising Project, funded by a successful UNISON International Development Fund (UIDF) bid in collaboration with NOMADESC and War on Want. This project aims to help further develop, mobilise and politicise activists in defence of public services. It also seeks to build new national and international political education alliances aimed around increasing activity and training new leaders.

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All of this activity continues to demonstrate the positive impact that targeted, practical solidarity can have.

Conference asks the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Encourage unions and branches to link with organisations such as War on Want and Justice for Colombia in order to continue to help develop relationships with trade union organisations in Colombia;
- 2) To develop these links with a view to providing practical support and solidarity through delegations;
- 3) Continue to work with War on Want to support campaigns.

Newcastle City

74. Prison Term for Miscarrying

In 2013 a young pregnant woman, Beatriz, made the headlines around the world when the authorities in El Salvador refused her an abortion, despite the fact that continuing with the pregnancy would have almost certainly killed her. After a period of sustained pressure on the authorities a caesarean was carried out. The foetus could never have survived and the young woman's life was saved. In another case a nine year old girl who had been abused since infancy gave birth at ten years of age because it is not common for the authorities to afford women any leniency and the decision taken over Beatriz is rare. Every year, thousands of women and girls are denied their human rights by El Salvador's total ban on abortion.

Conference will recall a motion in 2007 regarding the ban on abortions in Nicaragua and thank the women's committee for work undertaken to raise awareness of the issues. However, these governments are ultimately responsible for the resulting deaths of women and girls, and for the thousands whose human rights have been violated by a ban on abortion. These bans reflect the idea that those who abuse children and who rape women and girls can do so without any fear of reprisal whilst the victims have all their human rights denied.

In El Salvador the ban makes it a crime for women and girls to have an abortion, and for anyone to help them have one.

Under the abortion ban, women and girls found guilty of terminating their pregnancies face jail sentences of up to eight years. Those who have miscarriages may be charged with 'aggravated homicide' and jailed for up to 50 years, because they too are suspected of having 'back door' abortions. Convictions are often based on weak evidence, following flawed trials. One woman was sentenced to 40 years imprisonment for miscarrying. She did not even realise she was pregnant until she started to bleed in the toilets at her work. She was rushed to hospital where a member of staff reported her to the police. She was sentenced to aggravated

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homicide for having a miscarriage. She had one son who was five at the time who she will not see until he is 45 years old.

El Salvador's Ministry of Health estimated that between 2005 and 2008 over 19,000 abortions took place in secret – it is believed a quarter of these were performed on girls under 18 years. Seeking abortion in secret puts women and girls in danger and it is also estimated that 11% of those who undergo a secret abortion die.

El Salvador is one of seven Latin American countries where there is a total ban on abortion. The others are Chile, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua and Suriname. In a BBC report on 24 September, Amnesty International said, "The horrific repression that women and girls in El Salvador face is truly shocking and akin to torture" – a conclusion backed by the UN. El Salvador's total ban on abortion is a serious human rights violation and displays a deep seated discrimination against women and girls that restricts their every move and needs to be urgently repealed.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to work with the National Women's Committee, the International Committee, Regional Women's Committees and any other relevant committees to:

- 1) Sign up to the Amnesty International letter to El Salvador President Sánchez Cerén calling on the government to repeal the law;
- 2) Raise awareness amongst branches and regions and encourage them to sign up to the letter to the El Salvador President;
- 3) To urge the National Labour Link Committee to take up this matter within the Labour Party at all levels;
- 4) To promote this issue within the TUC and with other relevant campaigning organisations.

Isle of Wight LG

75. Cuba

Conference acknowledges the announcement from the United States Government in December 2014 that the US and Cuba had agreed to restore diplomatic ties that the US severed more than 50 years ago, and that President Barack Obama had called for an end to the long economic embargo.

Conference also notes the release from custody of Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero and Gerardo Hernández, who were able to be reunited with their fellow members of the "Miami 5", Fernando González and René González, in Cuba.

But Conference must also acknowledge that the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the US and Cuba is only the beginning of a process toward the normalisation of relations, and this will not be possible while the trade blockade remains in effect.

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Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to campaign alongside Cuban solidarity organisations to call for:

- 1) The ending of the US trade embargo;
- 2) The removal of Cuba from the US terrorist state list;
- 3) The normalisation of relations of Cuba with US and the UK.

Conference also notes and congratulates Cuba Solidarity Campaign (CSC), on the tireless work it has undertaken in support of Cuba, and calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Encourage Regions and Branches to affiliate to CSC;
- b) Encourage Branches to send solidarity delegations to visit Cuba.

Newcastle City

76. Oppose Market Liberalisation in Cuba

Conference welcomes the easing of the US embargo on Cuba.

Conference notes that the US has recognised that the embargo has failed to overthrow the Cuban regime and the US is changing its strategy in an attempt to entrench neo-liberal/market-led principles in Cuba.

Whilst Conference recognises that Cuba is far from an egalitarian society, Conference calls on the National Executive Council to issue a statement:

- 1) Opposing the dismantling of Cuba's planned economy and its successes, which will mean a rolling back of the gains of the Cuban Revolution;
- 2) Supporting a state monopoly of foreign trade controlled by a government based upon workers' democracy.

Nottingham City UNISON (L Gov)

77. Solidarity with Greece

Conference welcomes the formation of the new Syriza government in Greece that places people at the heart of its programme of change.

Conference notes the crippling bail-out package imposed through the EU/IMF Memorandum has created enormous hardship. As well as damaging society these policies have failed to reboot the Greek economy. The public debt in relation to GDP is now far greater than it was before the programme started in 2010.

Greek people have chosen a new path. They have chosen a government committed to ending the austerity programme. They have voted for immediate debt repudiation

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and renegotiation. They have voted for the humanitarian crisis to be addressed as the top priority. The government are taking immediate steps to support those suffering the most under the austerity measures and to restore basic rights.

The Greek election results have implications for the UK and the whole of Europe. Austerity policies have been a choice by those in power, and they have failed. Greece reminds us that different economics and politics are possible.

Undoubtedly there will be pressure on the new Syriza Government from the EU, the banks and their friends not to deliver their promises

Solidarity with Greece at this time is an imperative for Greeks and for all European working people.

Conference applaud the courage of the people of Greece in choosing hope and a new direction in policy that can start to rebuild a sustainable Greek economy and faith in politics.

Conference resolves to:

- 1) Defend the right for Greece to end austerity;
- 2) Support the action on debt being called for by the new government of Greece;
- 3) Call on our political representatives to exercise their vote within official sector finance agencies, within the European Parliament and pursue other diplomatic activities that will support debt reform;
- 4) Sign the open letter of support to the Greek anti-austerity movement (GSC website);
- 5) Call on prospective parliamentary candidates standing in the coming Westminster elections to support the Greek's anti-austerity policy;
- 6) Affiliate to the Greek Solidarity Campaign and ask UNISON to contribute £500.

Community and Voluntary Organisations

78. Greek Solidarity

Conference welcomes the formation of the new Syriza Government in Greece that places people at the heart of its programme of change.

Conference notes the crippling bail-out package imposed through the EU/IMF Memorandum has created enormous hardship. As well as damaging society these policies have failed to reboot the Greek economy. The public debt in relation to GDP is now far greater than it was before the programme started in 2010

Greek people have chosen a new path. They have chosen a government committed to ending the austerity programme. They have voted for immediate debt repudiation and renegotiation. They have voted for the humanitarian crisis to be addressed as the top priority. The government are taking immediate steps to support those suffering the most under the austerity measures and to restore basic rights.

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However Conference does express concern that the Nazi Golden Dawn party came third in the election and that any solidarity campaign should include opposition to fascism and the far right, this development further emphasises the need to defend the Syriza government.

The Greek election results have implications for the UK and the whole of Europe. Austerity policies have been a choice by those in power, and they have failed. Greece reminds us that different economics and politics are possible.

Undoubtedly there will be pressure on the new Syriza government from the EU, the banks and their friends not to deliver their promises. Solidarity with Greece at this time is an imperative.

Conference applauds the courage of the people of Greece in choosing hope and a new direction in policy that can start to rebuild a sustainable Greek economy and faith in politics.

Conference resolves resolve to:

- 1) Defend the right for Greece to end austerity;
- 2) Sign the open letter of solidarity with the Greek anti-austerity movement;
- 3) Work with and provide support for trade unions in Greece including our sister public sector union Civil Servants' Confederation (ADEDY);
- 4) Call on candidates standing in the coming Westminster elections to support Greece's anti austerity policies;
- 5) Call on our political representatives to support debt reform in Europe;
- 6) Call on the Labour Link to raise the need for European debt reform and solidarity with Greece in the Labour party;
- 7) Affiliate to the Greece Solidarity Campaign;
- 8) To link our own anti-austerity campaigns with struggles across Europe and internationally;
- 9) Contribute £500 to the Medical Aid for Greece appeal. Every penny raised is sent to the Solidarity Health Centres.

Islington UNISON (M)

Europe

79. Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and the threat to LGBT equality

Conference notes growing concern about the negotiations between the European Union (EU) and the United States (US) on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) free trade treaty. The proposed agreement is not about traditional trade issues. It is a wide-ranging trade deal giving unprecedented power and

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influence to transnational corporations and limiting the role of democratic governments to regulate in the public interest. It opens up public services, including our National Health Service (NHS), social services and education, to private profit to an unprecedented extent, removing the control of governments to act in the interest of their citizens, whether as workers or service users.

Conference notes that one of the key elements is the Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) clause, which would act as a tribunal. ISDS could see millions of pounds paid out to big private sector corporations if NHS services are brought back into the public sector.

The European Union has exclusive powers to negotiate trade and investment agreements. In the UK, the department for Business Innovation and Skills is the lead. The TTIP negotiations are shrouded in secrecy with national governments and Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) having only limited access to documents. Little information is publicly available about the content. Because of this lack of transparency or proper democratic oversight, trade unions and equality groups are denied opportunities for scrutiny and consultation.

Conference is concerned that the painstaking work over decades to build UK public services that are accessible to and meet the needs of all will be unravelled if profit becomes the only driver. The most disadvantaged in society, including lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT), women, disabled, Black, young and older people, are the most reliant on public services and are most likely to be in precarious employment.

As the US has not even ratified some of the most fundamental labour rights set out by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), for example the rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining, this means that standardisation across the EU and US as proposed by TTIP would most likely start an avalanche to the bottom.

Conference is concerned that previous free trade agreements, such as CETA between the EU and Canada, should not be used as a blueprint for TTIP. Agreements between Mexico, Canada and the US have resulted in a rise in atypical employment. This translates as precarious jobs for workers in already marginalised sectors of the workforce, particularly those who work in public services - many of whom are our members. TTIP may force more of our members into low paid, part time, zero hours contracts and reduced terms and conditions.

The anti-union policies of US corporations and the wish for transatlantic harmonisation would accelerate the US model of weakening the unions in Europe as well.

Conference believes that workers' rights are coming under increasing threat as neo-liberal policies are implemented globally. The work of trade unions, together with non governmental organisations, to challenge labour and human rights violations wherever they occur has never been more vital.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to work with our General Political Fund, UNISON international, service group executives, the self organised groups and young members group to:

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- 1) Encourage branches and regions to link up with organisations locally that are campaigning against TTIP such as War on Want, 38 Degrees and the World Development Movement;
- 2) Continue to spread the word about the dangers of TTIP using all possible means, including social media;
- 3) Work with the Trades Union Congress, European Federation of Public Service Unions, Public Services International and Education International to campaign against TTIP;
- 4) Use the campaign against TTIP to strengthen our links with sister unions in the United States and get them more involved in our labour internationals;
- 5) Working with Labour Link, lobby Labour MPs and MEPs to oppose TTIP.

National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee

80. Oppose Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and other Free Trade Agreements

Conference notes that the European Union (EU) is currently negotiating three free trade agreements including the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). The others are the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement with Canada (CETA) and the Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA).

These agreements threaten public services by harmonising regulatory standards, forcing through market liberalisation and could drive down trade union and employment rights by failing to enforce compliance with ILO core conventions.

Conference further notes that these free trade agreements will open up public procurement markets and that the controversial proposal to introduce the Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanism remains on the table, ISDS would allow multinational investors to challenge state actions which they perceive as threatening their investments in international tribunals rather than in national courts.

Conference believes that the harmonisation of regulatory standards puts at risk existing European regulations in the fields of public health, social and employment rights, health and safety and the environment.

Conference also believes, based on the experience of other trade agreements, that multinational corporations will use the ISDS mechanism to further erode the ability of national governments to act in the public interest.

Conference further believes that these Free Trade Agreements will only serve the interests of multinational corporations and those who seek to push back regulation and privatise public services and permanently remove them from democratic control in order to extract maximum private profit.

Conference applauds the campaigning that has already taken place in opposing TTIP, including the involvement of UNISON members in the #noTTIP delegation

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organised by Global Justice Now (formerly the World Development Movement) that went to Brussels to lobby MEPs in February 2015.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to work with the TUC, War on Want and Global Justice Now to campaign against TTIP and other free trade agreements;
- 2) Continue to raise awareness amongst UNISON members of the damaging effects on public services, democracy and working people of these agreements;
- 3) Work through Labour Link to raise our concerns about free trade agreements with Labour MPs and MEPs.

Stockport LG

81. Stop the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership

The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (often referred to as TTIP), is a proposed trade agreement between the European Union and the United States. It promotes itself as a mechanism to remove barriers to trade in order that corporations can operate in an environment with less regulatory restrictions. It will potentially affect areas as diverse as the NHS, food safety law, environmental legislation, banking regulation and the sovereign powers of individual nations. Publicity is scarce despite the fact it has such far reaching implications.

At this stage, the agreement is still at the negotiation stage, and as such represents an opportunity to shape it, or indeed block it, to reflect the wishes of the public across two democratic powers. It should, for example, be unthinkable that the NHS would be affected by an agreement that could potentially allow corporations to recover potential loss of earnings brought about by governments trying to improve the quality of lives of the population.

The possible consequence of recompensing a tobacco firm for a loss of sales due to stricter government health legislation would be unacceptable. This is what happened in Australia under the terms of a similar partnership arrangement when the government enforced cigarette packaging.

At present, negotiations continue with the NHS still offered as part of the deal. There is still a chance that food and environmental safety may be compromised in order for private corporation profiteering as the US imposes far laxer legislation in general than the EU. Banking organisations, who don't at present have the best of track records in providing the financial return they promise, may become subject to less regulation, not more.

There may be consequences for terms and conditions and the ability to make improvements on behalf of our members, and a possible implication of the deal is widespread outsourcing of public services.

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Proposed actions:

- 1) Write to all MPs/MEPs with our concerns and asking their position;
- 2) Advise members of where their representatives stand on TTIP;
- 3) Write to branches with details of 38 Degrees campaign to go to members;
- 4) Look into other ways to support campaigning;
- 5) Call on UNISON's Labour Link to lobby the Labour Party for full opposition to TTIP;
- 6) Call on the National Executive Council to write an open letter to Vince Cable calling for rejection of TTIP.

Transport for Greater Manchester

82. A Europe fit for Workers

Conference notes the alarming rise of the nationalist right demanding withdrawal from the European Union as well as targeting migrants as being responsible for some of the economic woes in the country. Conference also notes the Conservatives are promising a referendum on withdrawal from the European Union (EU).

This contrasts with the European Commission that has reported that mobile workers from the countries that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007 have had a positive impact on Member States' economies and have not led to serious disturbances on their labour markets.

Conference also acknowledges that the pursuit of free trade through the introduction of The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) is about imposing a regulatory structure to be enforced through an international policing mechanism that likely would not be approved through the normal political processes in each country. The rules that will be put in place as a result of the deal are likely to be friendlier to corporations and less friendly to the environment and consumers than current rules.

Conference believes that:

- 1) That British withdrawal from the EU would strengthen the nationalist right;
- 2) That while we rightly criticise and oppose the free market capitalist and bureaucratic aspects of the EU, we need to unite with trade unions and workers across Europe to challenge this and not cut ourselves off from them by advocating withdrawal;
- 3) That UNISON should oppose withdrawal from the EU and strengthen our links with trade unions across Europe in campaigning for a European wide movement that can coordinate to oppose privatisation, neo liberalism, fight to defend the welfare state, public services and worker's rights;

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- 4) That UNISON should pro-actively combat the racist, anti-working class ideas being spread by the anti-Europe, anti-migrant nationalist right and right wing press that blames other workers for the economic crisis;
- 5) That TTIP is a major threat to our public services being delivered by publicly accountable bodies in the future.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) To oppose withdrawal from the EU;
- b) To support freedom of workers movement across Europe;
- c) To continue to campaign against TTIP;
- d) To advocate worker's solidarity across Europe to fight for greater democracy, against cuts and austerity, and for levelling up of social provision and rights;
- e) To work with other trade unions and labour movement bodies across Europe to campaign on these issues;
- f) To seek a union in Eastern Europe and Greece to twin and build links with.

Newcastle City

83. Austerity Europe

Conference notes with concern the tremendous damage done by austerity policies across the European Union.

In response to the financial crisis of 2007/8, European Union policy-makers have promoted cuts to public spending, privatisation of public assets and the weakening of social protections.

These policies have been forced on countries requiring bail-outs by the Troika of the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

The European Commission has also initiated the REFIT (Regulatory Fitness and Performance: Results and Next Steps) agenda "to detect regulatory burdens and to identify opportunities for simplification". Under REFIT, the Commission has withdrawn health and safety proposals on the protection of workers against work-related cancers and musculoskeletal disorders. Conference believes that the ETUC is correct in identifying that "the Commission is engaged in a process aimed at the deregulation of Europe, the dismantling of legislation protecting workers' rights and the weakening of social dialogue".

While austerity policies are being internationally-imposed on the bailed-out countries, some national governments, including our own, have voluntarily imposed austerity policies and deregulation on their own populations – with little or no regard to public opinion or electoral mandate. Austerity policies have been applied across our continent such that it is now difficult to identify what was previously sometimes called the European social model of capitalism.

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Austerity policies have not worked, as Europe has been slow to emerge from the crisis. The economist Joseph Stiglitz estimated that the cumulative loss in the eurozone since 2008 is some \$6.5trillion. The current modest growth rates are below the historic average and there is no evidence of the economy catching up after the recession. Indeed, the long recession has lowered Europe's potential to grow as young people who should be accumulating skills are not doing so.

Moreover, the social cost of austerity is enormous. Both Oxfam and the Red Cross have produced damning reports that have highlighted greater inequality and poverty in Europe. Oxfam compared the impact of austerity in Europe to that of IMF structural adjustment programmes in South America and Sub-Saharan Africa in the 1980s/90s.

Both Greece and Spain have unemployment rates close to 25%, with the rate exceeding 50% for young people. Greece has recently elected the anti-austerity Syriza Party and in Spain the Podemos Party is performing well in opinion polls. These shifts in party support have been described as signalling that Europe's long, failed experiment with austerity is cracking. Conference welcomes electoral developments that demonstrate public rejection of austerity economics across Europe.

However, the social problems caused by austerity can also be fertile territory for far-right parties. In some countries, anti-austerity economics or anti-EU politics is combined with nationalism and racism by parties like the Front National in France and Jobbik in Hungary and Conference condemns these parties.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with International and European-level organisations, including Public Services International (PSI) and the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), to challenge the neo-liberal orthodoxy and develop alternative economic strategies for national, European and International economic revival;
- 2) Continue to work with and develop links with trade unions representing public sector workers elsewhere in Europe, including Ver.di and the Confédération générale du travail (CGT);
- 3) Continue to work with Hope Not Hate to campaign against racist policies and parties.

Manchester Branch

Equalities

84. Disability Policy for the New Government

Conference recognises the devastating impact of the previous government's policy on disabled people. The public sector cuts and welfare reform led to increased isolation, exclusion, discrimination and demonization of disabled people.

Over the last five years disability hate crime has risen; welfare reform has had up to a twenty times greater impact on disabled people; redress in employment tribunals

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has been made financially inaccessible for disabled people; and media portrayal of disabled people as benefit cheats has become the accepted norm.

With a new government in place now is the time to influence policy and decisions that will affect our Disabled Members going forward. We would like to see this government:

- 1) Review the welfare benefits system and reverse the unfair changes imposed on disabled people;
- 2) Improve practical and financial support for disabled people seeking work;
- 3) Increase the number of fully trained medical professionals throughout the health care system;
- 4) Restore the Independent Living Fund so disabled people can retain their independence;
- 5) Ring fence Public Health and Social Care funding;
- 6) Abolish 15 minute home care visits;
- 7) Reform the law regarding sickness absence and disability leave;
- 8) Introduce legal aid for disability discrimination cases;
- 9) Take positive action to tackle disability hate crime;
- 10) Make democracy and decision making process accessible for disabled people.

We recognise that this is a panacea that UNISON cannot deliver but we can seek to influence government policy in this direction. Conference call on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Lobby government to introduce disability friendly policies based on the above bullet points;
- b) Work with National Labour Link to secure political approval for these policies;
- c) Launch a publicity campaign to gather public support for these policies;
- d) Call for an early day motion to be tabled to assess the cumulative impact on disabled people of the previous government.

National Disabled Members Committee

85. Creating an Agenda on Equality and Human Rights

There has been a roll-back on equality and human rights throughout the UK despite decades of anti-discrimination legislation, statutory duties to promote equality of

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opportunity, domestic legislation on human rights and the UK's obligations under a wide range of EU and UN equality and human rights instruments.

The persistent attack on public services has further eroded equality and human rights for many across society including women; children and young people; black people and ethnic minority groups, including migrant workers; people with disabilities; workers and trade unions.

Governments' failures on implementation of their equality and human rights obligations and the persistent attack on equality and human rights needs to be addressed on multiple levels including pressure on Governments and public bodies, a new set of demands at the bargaining table, and a raised awareness amongst UNISON members of the rights that are denied or frustrated.

In this motion we set out, in summary form, the areas of public policy and legislation which a range of UN Committees have identified as requiring action by the UK if widening discrimination, inequality, erosion of human rights and the persistent attack on social and economic rights is to be addressed.

In 2009 the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) recommended action that included the UK's obligation to:

- 1) Reduce unemployment, particularly for vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities and ethnic minorities;
- 2) Overcome gender inequalities at work, including the gender pay gap;
- 3) Combat poverty, fuel poverty and children's poverty;
- 4) Address the impact of welfare reforms on vulnerable groups;
- 5) Guarantee access to adequate housing for all, including the provision of sites for Roma, Gypsies and Travellers;
- 6) Overcome health inequalities;
- 7) Reduce discrimination in education;
- 8) Combat violence against women;

The unfettered right to strike, identified in previous reports, has never been implemented.

One important overall observation was the fact that failing to produce an action plan which recognised political devolution and responsibilities for overseas territories led to uneven development on equality and human rights.

In 2013 the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) recommended action that included the UK's obligation to:

- a) Ensure that women can access courts effectively;

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- b) Ratify the Istanbul Convention;
- c) Make forced marriage a criminal offence;
- d) Adopt a comprehensive national action plan to tackle trafficking in women and girls;
- e) Improve mental health care in all prisons;
- f) Take steps to end occupational segregation and reducing the gender pay gap.

The Committee also made a number of specific observations on actions to eliminate discrimination against women in Northern Ireland.

In 2008 the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) recommended action that included the UK's obligation to:

- i) Allocate the maximum available resources to implement children's rights and eradicate child poverty;
- ii) End the use of physical restraint and solitary confinement on children in detention;
- iii) Establish mechanisms for monitoring and collecting data on cases of violence, sexual abuse, neglect and exploitation;
- iv) Tackle inequalities in access to health service;
- v) Reduce the achievement gap in education for children with disabilities, Roma and Traveller children and asylum-seeking children;
- vi) Raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility and develop alternative measures to detention of children.

In 2011, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) recommended action that included the UK's obligation to:

- A) Produce a detailed action plan or strategy to tackle race inequality;
- B) Review the impact of 'stop and search' powers on ethnic minority groups under various pieces of legislation in the UK;
- C) Take all necessary steps to eliminate all racist bullying in schools.

In 2008 the UN Human Rights Committee (CCPR), that monitors implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, recommended action that included the UK's obligation to:

- I) Investigate alleged acts of torture, ill-treatment and suspicious deaths inflicted by UK personnel in detention facilities in Afghanistan and Iraq;
- II) Ensure that no one is returned to another country if there are substantial reasons for fearing that they may be subjected to torture;

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- III) Ensure stop and search powers are used in a non-discriminatory manner;
- IV) End the detention of asylum seekers in prison;
- V) Combat negative attitudes towards Muslims;
- VI) Encourage increased representation of women and ethnic minorities in the judiciary; and
- VII) Review legislation which denies all convicted prisoners the right to vote.

In 2013, the UN Committee against Torture (CAT) recommended action that included the UK's obligation to:

- aa) Improve efforts to prevent violence and self-harm in places of detention;
- ab) Establish standards and measures of compliance to prevent ill-treatment of patients receiving health care services;
- ac) Investigate alleged acts of torture and ill-treatment of detainees held overseas under the State's control or jurisdiction;
- ad) Take steps to prevent vulnerable asylum seekers and torture survivors from being entered into administrative detention;
- ae) Ensure that electrical discharge weapons (tasers) are used only in extreme and limited situations where there is a real and immediate threat to life or risk of serious injury;
- af) Use restraint against children only as a last resort and to prevent harm rather than for disciplinary purposes; and
- ag) Direct children with mental disabilities to appropriate health institutions rather than police custody.

Conference notes that between 2015 and 2017 the UK Government will be re-examined by the relevant UN Committee on its compliance with all these Treaties and the actions it has taken to implement the above recommendations. For the first time the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) will also examine the UK Government's implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities following its ratification in 2009.

Conference is concerned that in addition to its failure to implement its Treaty obligations the UK Government has also so far failed to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (CMW) as well as the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CED).

Conference is further concerned at the failure of the UK Government to incorporate each Treaty into domestic law despite this being a key recommendation in the concluding observations from various Treaty bodies over many years.

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Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to work with relevant UNISON structures to press the UK Government for implementation of the above recommendations and its obligations and duties under international human rights law. In particular:

AA) To ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (CMW) and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CED);

AB) To lift all reservations to the seven Treaties it has ratified;

AC) To incorporate each Treaty into domestic law;

AD) To ensure that the lead Government Department fulfills its obligation to ensure that each Treaty is mainstreamed across government;

AE) To consult with trade unions, human rights groups, and civil society to gain widespread input into the state report and to share a draft of the state report prior to submission to the UN;

AF) To ensure the input from the devolved administrations where Treaties refer to areas of devolved responsibility;

AG) To respond seriously to concluding observations of the Treaty bodies through the development of action plans outlining how they will be met, where responsibility lies in government and when action should be delivered by.

Conference also calls on the National Executive Council:

1a) To work with all relevant structures to develop claims for the bargaining agenda in pursuance of those recommendations, which are capable of being implemented by bargaining, for example on terms and conditions and staffing levels, and those which can be implemented through policy adjustments by public bodies and public employers;

1b) To develop education and organising programmes to raise awareness among the members of how to use the existing equality and human rights tools to secure their rights.

In developing these strategies UNISON notes the UNCESCR recommendation on the responsibilities of devolved administrations as well as the UK Government.

UNISON Northern Ireland

Racism

86. Immigration

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Conference notes:

- 1) The rise in anti-immigrant rhetoric and legislation both in the UK and across Europe;
- 2) The growth of parties which use anti-immigrant language including UKIP across many parts of Europe.

Conference believes that:

- a) Austerity, including the huge cuts to workers wages, conditions alongside the assault on welfare are in no way caused by immigration. The richest 1% have concentrated huge wealth in its hands and are keen for immigrants to be blamed for austerity in order to remove the focus on themselves;
- b) The workers' movement is weakened in its ability to challenge austerity if it allows anti immigrant arguments and political organisations to grow;
- c) All workers have an interest in resisting racism and anti immigrant scaremongering;
- d) The Labour Party leadership has failed to stand up to the racism of anti immigrant parties and its rhetoric and this has allowed it to become much more widespread and accepted;
- e) Immigrant workers are a valuable and welcome part of the labour movement. UNISON has led a number of key fights involving migrant workers over the recent period such as the action by cleaners at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS). Migrant workers should be enabled to play a part in our union at all levels;
- f) A fight back against the attacks we face will only be enhanced if all parts of the workforce are seen and treated as equal.

Conference resolves to:

- i) Provide information to members countering the anti immigrant arguments including production of a pamphlet for members;
- ii) Call on UNISON Labour Link to inform the Labour Party leadership of our opposition to its pandering to the anti immigrant right wing;
- iii) Work with anti racist organisations like Stand up to Racism, Stand Up to UKIP, Hope Not Hate and Unite Against Fascism to build anti racist activity and combat anti migrant racism.

Islington UNISON (M)

Civil Rights

87. The Right to Protest

Conference notes that:

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- 1) Protest has played a significant role in bringing about social and political change, from votes for women to the establishment of the welfare state and trade union rights;
- 2) There have been increased attacks on our right to protest by governments seeking to undermine effective protest at a time of unprecedented cuts and austerity measures, including the routine use of kettling, indiscriminate batoning by police, excessive charging of protesters and sentencing in courts;
- 3) At the G20 in 2009 protest these tactics resulted in the death of Ian Tomlinson. During the student protests of 2010 Alfie Meadows was almost killed with a blow to the head by a police baton. Many recent protests against fracking have been very heavily policed, with intimidatory tactics used;
- 4) The recent revelations about the treatment of striking miners at Orgreave during the 1984-1985 strike show how these tactics have been used against the trade union movement. There have already been threats to further tighten up anti-trade union laws following public sector strikes, attacks on union facility time and victimisation of trade union activists;
- 5) In February 2015 the Metropolitan Police announced that they would not enforce road closures for the Climate Action demo in March 2015, insisting that the organisers hire private security. This amounts to the police deciding who should have the right to protests, and is a very retrograde development that must be opposed.

Conference believes that:

- a) There is no place for crowd control and intimidation tactics by the police that threaten the right to protest or measures which restrict our right to strike;
- b) Campaigns to publicise the injustice of the arrests, sentencing and police tactics, must be developed to support those protestors facing serious charges, and to defend our right to protest;
- c) Supporting others already campaigning for justice against police violence and racism will strengthen this initiative;
- d) Defend the Right to Protest (DtRtP), a broad-based campaign originally set up to defend those arrested in the student protests of 2010, has played an important role in bringing together campaigners to defend basic rights, and in particular has been successful in highlighting these issues for trades unionists. UCU, PCS and the NUT are among those national unions supporting DtRtP.

Conference resolve:

- i) To publicise and support meetings, protests, petitions and other forms of solidarity organised to show support for victimised protesters;
- ii) To affiliate to DtRtP and to publicise its work among branches, regions and self-organised groups.

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Community and Voluntary Organisations

Decentralisation

88. UNISON and Devolution

Conference notes the debate around devolution which occurred in 2014 impacted on all parts of the United Kingdom with the referendum on Scottish independence and the subsequent Smith Commission; the passage of the Wales Act 2014; the increased momentum behind combined authorities and “City deals” in England; the Conservative Party’s proposals around “English Votes for English Laws” in the Westminster Parliament; and the Stormont House Agreement in Northern Ireland at the end of the year.

Conference recognises that the debate on fiscal and legislative devolution is fast moving across the UK and that public opinion across the United Kingdom does not provide an endorsement for a single proposal. Conference also recognises that between 2010 and 2015 the Coalition Government cynically sought to use aspects of the devolution debate to justify the attempted introduction of regional pay in the public sector, to undermine the provision of public services through the promotion of outsourcing and privatisation and as a tactic to either pass on or avoid blame for the drastic spending cuts they inflicted on public bodies and devolved administrations in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Conference also recalls that in 2004 National Delegate Conference brought about rule changes for UNISON which led to the establishment of a Devolution Protocol for the union in 2005. This Devolution Protocol was necessary to allow the union to reflect on differences in policy, bargaining and communications across the nations and regions of the United Kingdom – as well as to facilitate learning from different experiences. Rule B 2.7 states that it is intended “To devolve to regions policy making responsibility in relation to devolved administrations while maintaining the integrity and unity of the union”.

Conference believes that there is a bargaining agenda that unites the union around:

- 1) Collective bargaining in the public, private and voluntary sectors;
- 2) Low pay, living wage and fair pay;
- 3) Equal pay;
- 4) Equalities;
- 5) Decent pensions;
- 6) Rights and conditions for part time workers;
- 7) Ending vulnerable and casualised work;
- 8) Skills and access to training;

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9) Safe working environments.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Unite all UNISON branches and UNISON regions around a vision of quality public services, social justice, fair taxation and fair funding;
- b) Continue to support the principles behind Rule B 2.7;
- c) Provide a framework within existing structures for UNISON regions in England to take a view on city-region proposals outside London and on any new proposals for changes to London governance;
- d) Work with service groups on their bargaining priorities across the UK;
- e) Unite the union around our national recruitment and organising priorities;
- f) Update and improve the existing UNISON Devolution Protocol and its implementation;
- g) Work with UNISON regions on their policy and campaigns to ensure the continuation of the universal provision of public services.

National Executive Council

89. Devolution: seizing the opportunities, avoiding the threats

Conference notes that issues around the scale of governance have come to the fore in political debate in recent months. Questions that have become more prominent in the political discussion include:

- 1) The relationship between the UK and Europe;
- 2) The relationship between the nations of the UK;
- 3) The relationship between central and local government.

Conference notes recent agreements between the Con-Dem Coalition Government and some Combined Authority (CA) areas.

- a) In Greater Manchester, the CA was established in 2011. In November 2014, it was agreed with the Treasury that additional powers and resources would be transferred to the CA in the areas of transport, planning, housing, health and social care, skills and business support, early years, policing and justice. A newly-constituted Greater Manchester mayor will lead on transport, housing and policing;
- b) In West Yorkshire, a combined authority was established in April 2014. The CA signed a growth deal with the Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg in November

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2014. The deal is claimed to bring more jobs, homes and transport funding to the area. There is no requirement or agreement to have a new mayor position;

- c) In Sheffield, the city region CA was set up in April 2014. The Local Enterprise Partnership agreed a growth deal in July 2014, and then the CA agreed a devolution deal with the Deputy Prime Minister in December 2014. The devolution deal covers areas including skills, housing, transport and growth. Again, there is no requirement or agreement to have a new mayor position;

Conference supports the following principles in relation to devolution:

- i) That public services are best delivered directly by democratically accountable bodies;
- ii) That public sector bodies should work together where possible and appropriate. This holds some potential for cost savings and service improvements within the public sector;
- iii) That employment standards should be adopted in the delivery of public services – binding all employers;
- iv) That public bodies should promote sustainable economic, environmental and social well-being;
- v) That it is important that people feel connected to civic politics, with opportunities for engagement and participation.

Conference believes that:

- A) The devolution of powers from Central Government to a more local level offers potential for real improvements in economic performance and the quality of life;
- B) Voters have shown little enthusiasm for taking part in elections to choose directly-elected mayors or Police Commissioners. Nine out of ten English cities rejected having elected members in referendums in 2012. Executive mayors who cover large geographical areas are likely to be remote and unaccountable figures;
- C) Devolution alone cannot overcome the problems of chronic underfunding of public services. There is a danger that in a context of austerity, devolution of power can simply mean the devolution of choices about how to make cuts.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to:

- I) Support devolution arrangements that hold the prospect of protecting public services and promoting quality jobs;
- II) Support devolution of public spending decisions to a more local level and pursue devolution in towns and counties as well as cities;
- III) Oppose changes in governance that facilitate cuts and privatisation;

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- IV) Continue to campaign against austerity and for fair funding for public services across the UK;
- V) Seek the inclusion of employment charters that bind all employers delivering public services over the widest geographical area possible;
- VI) Demand that devolved political structures are based on improved accountability to citizens rather than to central government;
- VII) Conduct a review of alternative models for democratically-accountable governance in the English regions. The review should consider the potential role of newly-constituted regional assemblies. The review should report back with recommendations to Conference 2016.

North West Region

Northern Ireland

90. Supporting the Northern Ireland Peace Process

As political devolution develops across the UK there is a danger that Northern Ireland may be viewed as a political situation on which agreement has been reached. This is not the case.

The crisis talks which the UK and Irish Government held with political parties in Northern Ireland were used to impose structural readjustment with an austerity package which puts the Peace Process in jeopardy.

The 'adjustment' dismantles public services and jobs at a time when economic and social stability is needed most. This has resulted in industrial action and public protest on a wide scale.

The Stormont House Agreement betrays the commitments made by the UK Government to bring forward a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. This commitment has been replaced by a veto from the opponents of equality and human rights.

The People of Northern Ireland and UNISON members in particular place the highest emphasis on social and economic rights, based on objective need, as critical to underpinning future peace and prosperity for all. Public services are recognised as the key vehicle for delivering such rights. As co-signatory to the Peace Agreement the Cameron/Glegg Coalition walked away from its obligations. The other right wing coalition, the Irish Government, backed this position.

UNISON has consistently campaigned to secure the full implementation of the Peace Agreement. Consequently Conference calls on the incoming National Executive Council to strive to secure commitments from the current UK Government to reverse the structural adjustment, to remove the veto and to bring forward legislation at Westminster to secure a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland.

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UNISON Northern Ireland

91. Religious dogma has no place in politics and today's society.

Conference notes that Northern Ireland is still a country run and split not only along party political lines but on religious grounds and dogma. This is a country where a woman's right to choose is ignored on religious grounds from all across the political spectrum and women are forced to go to the mainland UK for abortions. It is a country that wants to force schools to teach creationism over evolution. And at the time of writing this motion is now trying to roll back the hard fought, hard won rights of our LGBT sisters and brothers.

Conference deplores the dangerous and retrograde launch of a Private Members Bill Consultation in December 2014 that refers to a Conscience Clause and wants it attached to the current Equalities Legislation. What this will mean for our LGBT brothers and sisters in Northern Ireland is that businesses, big and small, will be able to withhold or refuse service to them on the basis that this conflicts with their religious beliefs.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Put the might of this union behind our LGBT brothers and sisters efforts to halt this discriminatory piece of legislation;
- 2) Provide all branches in Northern Ireland with the materials and resources required to fight against the conscience clause;
- 3) To oppose the inclusion of any such clause in the name of equality.

Somerset County

Social Policy

92. Dismantling the Welfare State - Impact on Black Communities

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 are 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.

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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:

- 1) 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;
- 2) 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;
- 3) Increased conditionality for working-age claimants is more likely to impact on Black claimants as they are disproportionately represented among workless households;
- 4) 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 National Executive Council to work with the National Black Members Committee to seek to:

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

National Black Members' Committee

93. Attack on Child Benefit

Conference believes that child benefit is one of the most valuable and important planks of the British Welfare state.

Together with our National Health Service and the maintenance of employment, a universal children's allowance was one of the three pillars of the welfare state set out by William Beveridge in his 1942 seminal report.

Since 1946, when the first family allowance order books became valid, mothers have received a payment from the state for at least their second child – irrespective of their family income.

It was introduced to help alleviate poverty for women and children, the most important aspect of the benefit was that it was mainly paid directly to the mother.

Across the UK, child poverty action group report finds parents increasingly using child benefit to pay for essentials (food, nappies, clothes). Parents are expressing anger and disbelief at current cuts to the benefit.

The decision by the coalition government to effectively freeze the benefit, means test it and remove its universality, is regressive and unfair and will directly affect women and children primarily, throughout the UK.

We are therefore conference, dismayed and horrified that the Labour party has decided to continue with the freeze thus ensuring that children are continuing to pay for a deficit not of their making.

Conference call the National Executive Council to work with the Labour Link Committee to lobby the Labour Party to rethink its decision and, if elected in 2015, lift the freeze and reinstate the universal nature of this crucial benefit.

Lanarkshire Health

94. Further Attacks on the Welfare State

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Conference notes that the Employment Minister of the Tory/Lib Dem coalition government has informed parliament that randomised controlled trials of Universal Credit in work conditionality will start in the North West this year.

These trials will be carried out by Jobcentre Plus Work Coaches and will initially start in 10 universal credit sites and will be extended to further sites in the North West later in 2015.

This could see a claimant working 16 hours per week and receiving benefits being forced to prove that they were looking for full time work or face having their Universal Credits sanctioned or moved onto a full time job on a lower salary.

This follows the highest ever recorded benefit sanctions of 1,200,000 in the 12 months up to October 2014. Those sanctions drove unemployed people off benefits and into zero hour contracts, part time work and low wage economy.

Now the Government is attacking the in work poor, many of who work in the care industry and community voluntary sector.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to work with the TUC and public sector unions to develop policies and strategies which will see the Trade Union movement:

- 1) Support and defend claimant's rights to state benefits;
- 2) Campaign against zero hour contracts;
- 3) Campaign for a new Human Rights Charter in line with Article 25 of the European Charter of Rights which covers the right not to be subject to inhuman or degrading treatment;
- 4) Building a unity of purpose between unemployed workers and employed workers and their union organisations.

Salford City Unison

95. Threat to the bus pass and universal benefits

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to work with other interested bodies to continue to fight for the retention of the bus pass for all eligible older people and the retention of all universal benefits.

It notes that many buses rely heavily on older people to keep them running. Should the bus pass be withdrawn, many buses would have fewer passengers and this would seriously impact on the viability of service provision. This would have a particularly devastating impact on the elderly, leading to greater isolation and would be harmful to the local economy.

The use of buses by older people has ensured, in some cases, that routes are retained for the fare paying public, particularly in rural areas.

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Greater London Region

96. Foodbanks and Food Poverty

Conference condemns the increase in the number of people and families needing to use foodbanks. It is a scandal that in a rich country like the UK so many people are hungry and cannot afford to buy food.

The main reason for this increase has been the UK government's benefit cuts, sanctions and low wages.

Conference recognises that increasing numbers of UNISON members are using foodbanks and welcomes the work done by "There For You" to promote and support foodbanks.

Conference calls for a campaign to abolish the need for foodbanks through:

- 1) Ending austerity;
- 2) Increasing pay;
- 3) An end to the benefit cuts and sanctions;
- 4) A progressive taxation system that ensures a fairer distribution of the country's wealth.

However whilst foodbanks continue to exist we call on the trade union movement to support and work with them so that those people who use foodbanks can receive advice on benefit entitlements, trade union and employment rights.

South Lanarkshire UNISON

97. Tackling Fuel Poverty

Fuel poverty is defined as the condition of being unable to afford to keep one's home adequately heated, Conference is alarmed by findings of the Energy Bill Revolution campaign showing the UK has one of the worst rates of fuel poverty in Europe and secondly only to Estonia. According to the charity National Energy Action in Yorkshire and the Humberside alone 244,850 people live in fuel poverty. The Coalition government's austerity measures have reduced incomes and social security for the most vulnerable while their cuts have reduced the capacity of many advice organisations to provide much-needed support. Conference believes that is unacceptable for the UK which is the sixth richest country in the world to deny what should be a basic human right to live in a warm dry home.

Conference notes:

- 1) The Buildings Performance Institute of Europe in its report in 2011 found that the UK has the oldest housing stock in the European Union, with over half built before 1960 and just over 10% built since 1991;

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- 2) The UK's older housing stock means that homes here require double the energy to stay warm compared with many countries, even those with colder climates such as Sweden;
- 3) Cambridge Econometrics research shows a big energy efficiency programme for UK homes could create up to 130,000 British jobs;
- 4) House of Commons research for the TUC shows that in the Yorkshire and the Humberside region alone 24% workers in are paid below the living wage;
- 5) Joseph Rowntree Foundation research has demonstrated that for the first time over half of households below the poverty line include someone who is working.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to develop a UNISON campaign to support the Energy Bill Revolution campaign to eradicate fuel poverty this campaign should include:

- a) Lobbying councils and MP's to commit to renewed efforts tackling fuel poverty in the region and support advice organisations that high ensure eligible households receive the benefits and tax credits to which they are entitled;
- b) Highlighting how instrumental a living wage and fair pay rises are to tackling poverty alongside decent levels of social security benefits including the Winter Fuel Payment and Cold Weather Payment;
- c) Supporting proposals to reform energy markets and to cap the cost of heating bills;
- d) Supporting calls for the building of new social housing including council housing incorporating high energy efficiency standards. This should be accompanied by the renewal of existing housing stock to improve the heating and insulation of the homes starting with those of low income households;
- e) Encouraging a massive job creation programme through house building, energy improvements and insulation that will benefit people particularly targeting the areas of significant deprivation and poverty which will help develop skills and employment in these areas;
- f) Encourage the TUC and unions within the region to increase their active support for the Energy Bill Revolution campaign and encourage those unions not engaged with this campaign to do so.

Yorkshire & Humberside Region

98. Domestic Energy Bills and Fuel Poverty

Conference notes the recurring pattern whereby falls in the price oil and gas are not fully reflected in the price paid by consumer in their gas and electricity bills. The average household's annual energy bill is now £260 higher compared to 2010 and

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the poorest 10% of households have seen their energy bills rise nearly twice as fast as other households. The profit margins of the 'Big Six' suppliers have doubled in the last twelve months, increasing from 4% (£49) in 2013 to 8% (£105).

Conference recognises the hard work of our members in the energy industry dealing with customers' day in and day out, at weekends and over holiday periods. Our members have become experts in dealing with vulnerable and distressed customers, in helping them find solutions, and in ensuring good customer service is provided despite at times a lack of investment or excessive call volumes. They are also very much on the front line and often have to face angry and at times abusive customers for failings which are not in their control.

Conference notes that nearly a million households in Scotland are in fuel poverty which means they are unable to afford adequate warmth in the home. This is the highest level of fuel poverty ever recorded in Scotland and this trend is replicated across the UK. Half of those in fuel poverty in England are in work. While energy prices are an important component of fuel poverty, so are income levels and energy efficiency. Helping households become more energy efficient is a win-win, cutting carbon emissions and delivering cheaper fuel bills, alongside ending fuel poverty.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Make the increasing prevalence of fuel poverty part of the Worth It campaign;
- 2) Campaign for greater investment in energy efficiency by the UK and devolved administrations;
- 3) Promote UNISON's campaign to ensure that all energy customers receive high levels of customer support from a UK based, highly skilled and professional workforce;
- 4) Ensure that energy market reform recognises all elements of fuel poverty, price, income and energy efficiency, and that any changes do not result in a race to the bottom for jobs and quality of service.

Scotland Region

99. A Living Rent

Conference notes:

- 1) Soaring UK rent rises will leave almost six million private renters living in poverty by 2040, according to recent research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF);
- 2) Rents are growing more than wages, year in and year out and are becoming more and more unaffordable. This has caused overcrowding, exploitation and ill health;
- 3) It has reached the point that working people cannot afford to live in many high rent areas anymore with homelessness also on the increase;

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- 4) We are becoming economic slaves to a new master class of landlords who will evict tenants who object to rent increases or if they complain about the state of their property;
- 5) Huge amounts of taxpayers' money is wasted on housing benefit and little is invested in building new homes;
- 6) That in other countries such as Germany, Sweden, France and even America there is legal controls on rents;
- 7) A "Living Rent" is as much a basic human right as access to the National Health Service: It is a basic human right;
- 8) That a truly affordable and sustainable "Living rents" cap for social and market rents in different parts of the Country can be calculated as is already done with the Living Wage.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to ensure:

- a) That UNISON should campaign for a future government to begin a mass house building programme of social homes at social rents (around 50% of the market rent). This will also bring about reductions in rent in the private sector;
- b) That there should be compulsory regulation in the private rented sector to give tenants greater protection and security of tenure;
- c) That rent controls are reintroduced and rents are capped at a "Living Rent" set by an independent commission.

Housing Associations Branch (M)

100.Bedroom Tax

Conference condemns the 'under occupancy charge' more appropriately known as the "Bedroom Tax".

Conference notes that UNISON has stated that:

"The bedroom tax hits around half a million low-income households. Two thirds of the households affected include a person with a disability, while the tax also hits 60,000 carers."

"For the vast majority of those affected by the bedroom tax, there is nowhere smaller to move to. There is also now a real risk that the bedroom tax will cost more money than it saves."

Conference welcomes Ed Miliband's statement that a Labour Government will abolish the Bedroom Tax and notes that UNISON believes "change can't come soon enough for the families affected".

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

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- 1) Continue to produce material outlining the detrimental effects of the Bedroom Tax;
- 2) Make a statement that it opposes evictions for those who cannot pay their rent due to the Bedroom Tax;
- 3) Continue to explain that, in the long-term, building more social housing is needed to solve the housing shortage crisis.

South Derbyshire Healthcare

101. Investigate the Pros and Cons of an Unconditional Basic Income

Unconditional (or Universal) Basic Income is an idea that has been around for centuries and was supported by Martin Luther King. It has been getting a lot more discussion in the last couple of years, especially in the US and Europe. There have also been very successful and popular pilot schemes tried in India and Namibia.

The idea is that every single citizen receives a guaranteed monthly income that is sufficient to cover the costs of the basics for survival: food and shelter. Firstly it removes urgent poverty, desperation and hunger. It removes the disincentive to work that can be experienced with traditional welfare systems in which benefits are lost as earnings rise — instead earnings top up the Basic Income to pay for all additional needs beyond the basics. Removing the need for means-testing would save a huge amount of bureaucracy in the system, not to mention errors. Education and health outcomes would improve which would also create savings for society as well as improving people's living standards considerably. The findings from preliminary research into costings for such a scheme in the UK vary, but the theory is that in the medium to long term a Basic Income for all could be cost-neutral.

Unconditional Basic Income has support from economists from both the left and the right. Internationally, trade union opinions are mixed. Some are firmly against the idea, for example in Belgium, a country with high union density. There is strong trade union support in the Netherlands, Switzerland and Bulgaria. The Indian scheme was administered by a union. One UK trade union that is central to our current benefits system has already passed a motion to look into the pros and cons of Basic Income, and that work has begun. There are concerns about the possible impact on wages — these are counter posed against the belief that a Basic Income would strengthen workers' bargaining power. Only further pilot studies will provide us with more evidence on which to base our views.

Trade unions for decades have been at the forefront of pushing for progress, with working conditions and legislation. Ideas such as the theory of germs, the motor car and space travel, and causes like the end of slavery, votes for all and universal healthcare were all once dismissed as impossible. The jobs market will transform with rapidly increasing automation, and one thing is clear — in a rich country like ours, austerity is not fit for purpose to feed, clothe and house us all. We must transition into the 21st century with less brutality and suffering. We should investigate the idea of an Unconditional Basic Income further —and if we choose to

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support it we must use all of our powers of influence to promote it to our members, to non-members, and to decision-makers.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Investigate, with the help of UNISON's policy team, the pros and cons of introducing an Unconditional Basic Income in this country, to replace the current system of welfare;
- 2) Report back at next year's Conference with a full report of their findings (to include costings, possible means of implementation, likely effects both positive and negative) and a suggested policy position for delegates to debate and vote on.

West Midlands Community Branch

102.Domestic violence, a gendered issue

Conference notes that research from the home office has shown that nearly 90% of severe and repeated domestic violence is experienced by women. The Home Office report on domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking (findings from the British Crime Survey) reported that “women are the overwhelming majority of the most heavily abused group. Among people subject to four or more incidents of domestic violence from the perpetrator of the worst incident (since age 16), 89 per cent were women.”

Conference is concerned that on an average week in this country two women are murdered by their male partner in extreme cases of domestic violence, and 1 million women experience at least one incident of domestic abuse each year. UNISON and our trade unions are part of that society.

Conference notes that in describing domestic abuse as “gender-based” we are categorically not alleging that all perpetrators are male and all victims/survivors are female. Conference recognises that men and boys can also be the victims of violence. We also note with concern the rise in domestic abuse in same sex relationships: UNISON’s national LGBT Conference in 2013 noted that 37% of same sex relationships have featured non-consensual violence. Conference affirms our opposition to all violence, whatever the gender or age of the perpetrator or victim.

Conference reiterates our recognition that, in a sexist society, male violence against women plays a particular role in limiting the participation of women in all areas of civil life, including trade union activity. Therefore, we must address the particular problem of male violence against women.

In noting that domestic abuse is gender based we reiterate our recognition that historically physical and sexual violence has been used to control women, and there is still widespread tolerance for sexism and abuse of women. The Everyday Sexism project was established to record women’s experiences of sexism, harassment and assault – as at October 2014 there were 45,000 tweets and tens of thousands of posts on the website. The Zero Tolerance project in Scotland works with individuals, communities, women’s and men’s organisations, schools, the media and others to address the causes of violence against women, and bring about change - their

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research found that half of all young men believed that forced sex was justifiable in some circumstances; worryingly one third of young women also accepted this.

Conference welcomes the UN General Secretary in 2006 stating “Violence against women is not the result of random, individual acts of misconduct, but rather is deeply rooted in structural relationships of inequality between women and men”.

However, we remain concerned at the lack of progress and the recent moves to dilute the recognition of domestic abuse as a gendered issue – for example by the media publishing sensationalist data on the number of incidents of abuse by women which ignore patterns, severity, repetition and circumstances.

Conference is concerned that women order their day and lives around the restrictions to safety and freedom of movement which the background threat of men’s violence imposes, sometimes without them even realising it. Some women were surprised when it was pointed out to them that their own “habits” of not going out alone after dark, or of holding their keys in their hands whilst walking home in case they are attacked, are carried out because of a fear of violence from men. The women reported that they’d never thought of it in that context previously, it was just something they did.

Conference notes that despite significant social change, men continue to grow up within a deeply misogynistic male dominated culture where violence against women is commonplace and acceptable.

Sexual harassment and male violence against women can - and sadly do - occur within the labour movement and within our trade unions and labour movement groups at all levels.

In 2011 new Crown Prosecution Service guidance was published following a review of allegations of rape and domestic abuse. The research recorded that “During the 17 month period of the review, there were 5,651 prosecutions for rape and 111,891 for domestic violence. During the same period there were just 35 prosecutions for making false allegations of rape, six for making false allegation of domestic violence and three for making false allegations of both rape and domestic violence.”

However, it is still the case that women report that when they have been a victim, they are not believed. They may face allegations that they inflicted the injuries on themselves and/or inappropriate questioning of their mental health status, alcohol consumption and sexual history.

In a Mumsnet survey in 2012, 83% of those who had been raped or sexually assaulted failed to report it to police and 29% did not even report it to friends and family. More than half of the female respondents said the legal system, the media and society at large is unsympathetic to rape victims.

Conference notes that the fear of stigma and the fear of not being believed prevent many women from reporting violence. In 2014, HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, Tom Winsor, said: “Domestic abuse is not only about violence; it is about fear, control and secrecy. It is essential that the police make substantial reforms to their handling of domestic abuse, including in their understanding of the coercive and

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psychological nature of the crime as well as its physical manifestations. They must create the conditions so that victims have the confidence to call for help, in the knowledge that they will be believed and kept safe.”

Conference notes that as a member-representation organisation, the situation facing UNISON is different to that of the police, and that we are obliged to represent all our members to the best of our ability. Therefore, in any incident or allegation there must, of course, be a fair and impartial investigation that protects the rights of all parties. Conference notes our branches manage this on a daily basis. For example, in a situation where a member has put in an allegation against another member, each member has a representative who is there to protect their individual interests and to support them, but any investigation resulting from their allegations is independent, fair and impartial.

Likewise, if legal advice were sought in a situation where both a complainant and the person complained of sought UNISON’s assistance, the same test would be applied to both parties in that there would be separate legal evaluation of the complaint and the defence, and separate representation for both parties, where this was judged appropriate within UNISON’s legal guidelines.

Conference believes that it is essential that anyone reporting violence is confident that reporting such an incident would be taken seriously, and that all women who complain of male violence, both in and outside of the trade union movement, have the right to be listened to, their allegations taken seriously and properly investigated with appropriate action being taken if proven.

Conference believes that in adopting this approach we would be showing our million women members that when women complain of male violence within our movement, our trade union will provide support for them.

Conference further recognises that the National Women’s Committee, in submitting this motion, is the self-organised group for women members and therefore has an obligation to speak up for women’s rights and to defend women’s interests.

Conference believes that male violence against women is not acceptable in any case. It must not be tolerated from those who hold office or power in our movement: our movement must be a safe space for women.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to work with the National Women’s Committee to:

- 1) Improve understanding of the issues raised within this motion;
- 2) Share good practice throughout UNISON on campaigning and organising around ending violence against women;
- 3) Encourage branches to use the UNISON domestic violence guidance to negotiate workplace policies on supporting the victims of domestic abuse;
- 4) Issue guidance to branches on:
 - a) How to support women who allege violence;

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- b) How to ensure branches can represent all parties fairly and impartially in any investigation.

National Women's Committee

103. Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding Orders

Following publication of the Hardie Report into the implementation of the Mental Capacity Act 2005, Conference notes the concerns the report findings highlighted.

Conference particularly notes the concern expressed in regard to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLs). The intention of the safeguards is to provide legal protection for persons who are being deprived of their liberty for their own safety. The evidence suggests that thousands of people are being deprived of their liberty without the protection of the law and the protection that Parliament intended.

Conference supports the following recommendations made by Lord Hardie in his report:

- 1) Government works with regulators and professional bodies to ensure the Mental Capacity Act is given a higher profile in training, standard setting and inspections;
- 2) Government increases staff resources at the Court of Protection to speed up hearing of non-controversial cases;
- 3) Government reconsiders the provision of non means tested legal aid to those who lack mental capacity, especially in cases of deprivation of liberty;
- 4) Local Authorities and other bodies use their discretionary powers to appoint wholly independent Mental Capacity Advocates more widely than is currently the case, similar to the Prison Visitor system;
- 5) Government addresses the poor levels of awareness and understanding of Lasting Powers of Attorney and advanced decision to refuse treatment, among professionals in the Health and Social Care sectors;
- 6) Government reviews the criminal law provisions for ill treatment or neglect of persons lacking capacity to ensure that it is fit for purpose.

Conference believes that there is a need for transparency about the numbers of Deprivation of Liberty Orders being issued by local authorities. Conference is also concerned as to whether Deprivation of Liberty Orders are being used disproportionately against older people.

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Conference instructs the National Executive Council to:

- a) Undertake research into the numbers of Deprivation of Liberty Orders issued under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 by Local Authorities (with breakdown by age groups) using Freedom of Information requests;
- b) Campaign vigorously for the implementation of the recommendations of the Hardie report;
- c) Disseminate and publicise the issues highlighted by the Hardie report in UNISON publications;
- d) Report back on the progress achieved in implementing the points detailed in sub-paragraphs 1 to 3 to the 2016 National Delegate Conference.

Islington UNISON (M)

Environment

104.Fracking

Conference notes:

- 1) The enthusiasm of the Westminster government for fracking and other unconventional gas extraction are used to exploit hard-to-get fossil fuels, such as shale gas and coal bed methane;
- 2) In addition to the highly toxic chemicals used, fracking processes mobilise dangerous chemicals and radioactive substances in the coal and shale which can contaminate groundwater and soil, and leak into the atmosphere with consequences for public health and the climate.

Conference believes that this is a dangerous diversion from the urgent task of creating a sustainable economy based on renewable energy which can bring more jobs and wellbeing for people in Scotland. The health of people and the environment should be put before profit. For these reasons we oppose the development of fracking and other unconventional gas extraction methods and call on the Scottish Government to do the same.

Conference agrees to:

- a) Make members aware of the dangers of fracking, and encourage them to support campaigns against fracking;
- b) Support and lobby for a moratorium on all fracking and similar activities across the United Kingdom;
- c) Encourage councils to oppose fracking in their areas;
- d) Request UNISON to support local anti-fracking groups' activities;
- e) Encourage members at all levels of the union to support campaigns against fracking and to link up with local campaigners.

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City Of Edinburgh Council Unison

105.Global Warming - Time Running Out

Conference recognises that the threat of global warming to our environment and to the wellbeing of the world's population has been neglected by the UK government and that immediate actions are required to limit the damage that is already taking place. Conference recognises the Scottish Government's ambitious targets to reduce carbon emissions but notes that the UK Government have failed to adopt similar targets.

The Tories have sought to present a green face whilst pushing ahead with fracking and refusing to put in place measures to reduce emissions which lead to global warming.

Conference recognises that the warming of the planet that has already taken place has resulted in significant reductions in the ice cover in the Arctic and Antarctic as well as in mountain glaciers which threaten rises in sea levels and the provision of water supplies in many countries. Predicted further warming is likely to have catastrophic consequences.

Conference believes that the current neo-liberal global economic consensus is incompatible with the steps that are required to address the global warming crisis. We believe that greater democratic control over the economy and use of natural resources, collective rather than market led responses to energy supply and conservation and tighter regulation of all polluting processes are necessary and should be part of the UK Government's strategy.

In December 2015 at the UN Conference on Climate Change in Paris global leaders are expected to conclude negotiations for a new global deal to tackle climate change and address its impacts.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council, regions and branches to:

- 1) Continue to work with broad alliances, such as Stop Climate Chaos Scotland;
- 2) Build a huge campaign to demand that the UK representatives to the Paris talks are committed to ambitious and binding commitments to reduce emissions and limit the damage from global warming.

South Lanarkshire UNISON

Efficient and Effective Union

Branch Funding

106.Branch Funding

Conference notes that a review of branch funding in UNISON has been ongoing since 2011. Conference accepts that branch funding is a complex and controversial topic. However we believe that it is self-evident that, in the years since the current branch funding regime was adopted at National Delegate Conference 2001 there

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have been substantial changes in the environment in which UNISON operates, and that these have generally increased demands at branch level.

The key changes include:

- 1) Reduced significance of national collective bargaining with an increase in local bargaining;
- 2) The fragmentation of public services leading to almost all branches becoming multi-employer branches;
- 3) Devolution of administrative processes within the union to branches (e.g. the RMS).

In the opinion of Conference it is clear that there is a general need to devolve UNISON resources to the level at which they can best assist the union to meet the interests of our members. Conference calls on the National Executive Council to continue with the review of branch resources and report back to conference in 2016 and in so doing to recognise that significant devolution of the union's resources to its branches is required. In particular, Conference anticipates that the overall proportion of the union's resources allocated to branches will increase significantly over time under a future branch funding regime.

Lambeth

Industrial Action

107.Changes to strike pay

Conference notes that during the recent rounds of strikes within the NHS some branches found it difficult to get members to come out on strike on grounds of pay as we are asking them to lose money in order to gain a pay rise from the government. When trying to get members out on strike reps heard members saying they "cannot afford to lose a day's pay".

Conference notes that standard strike pay is normally paid once the fourth day of action has been undertaken. Whilst noting that the strike pay becomes payable from the first day. Conference calls on the National Executive Council for strike pay to be paid on the first full day of action.

Conference notes that strike pay, when paid is normally £15 per day. Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to amend the industrial action handbook to increase this amount in line with inflation.

Lincolnshire Health

Services to Members

108.Withdraw support for the Tax Refund Company - Personal Taxation Services

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Conference notes:

- 1) The Tax Refund Company is advertised to UNISON members by email and through letters to their home address. This company has been advertised to members as 'UNISON's Tax Refund Service - check you're not paying too much tax!'
- 2) The information in the adverts which are sent to members have emphasise the word 'free' by putting it both in bold and uppercase;
- 3) UNISON has used the following language to inform members about the 39% fee for using the service: "for every £1 of tax they get back, you will get 61p, GUARANTEED";
- 4) HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) provide clear advice on their website about how to claim your tax back for free;
- 5) UNISON provide welfare support to members through our own Charity 'There for You'.

Conference believes:

- a) Advertising the Tax Refund Company as 'UNISON's Tax Refund Service - check you're not paying too much tax!' gives the false impression that it is a UNISON owned service;
- b) Highlighting the word 'free' gives the initial impression to a member scanning the information that it is a free service for members;
- c) The persuasive language used to advertise the company is misleading UNISON members by disguising the amount of fee to be paid;
- d) UNISON should only be advertising services to members which are ethical and in the interest of members.

Conference resolves to call on the National Executive Council to:

- i) Withdraw its support and promotion for the Tax Refund Company to members;
- ii) Provide clear information to members about where to find the information about how they can claim their tax back free of charge;
- iii) Provide welfare officers at a local and regional level with information and guidance on how to support members to claim their tax back free of charge;
- iv) Review all products and services endorsed by UNISON – and confirm that they are ethical and in the interests of members.

***City & Islington College (M)
London Metropolitan University***

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109.Branch Support for Members in Severe Hardship

Conference believes that the local UNISON branch is sometimes in a better position than UNISON's national welfare charity "There for You" to provide prompt welfare assistance to members in severe hardship.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to develop a limited branch-based scheme with appropriate criteria and guidance which allows branches to provide urgent assistance to members when necessary given the current economic climate.

City & Islington College (M)

110.Costs of Representation at Professional Hearings

Conference notes that the current Code of Good Branch Practice (COGBP) says:

Section 12.3.4 "...Branches are required to pay all legitimate expenses incurred by members when they are not reimbursed by the employer or external body, provided UNISON represents them before that body or at an appeal. This does not include legal expenses if the case is outsourced, but it does include the usual expenses that a branch would normally pay for an activist to attend a meeting, such as travel and hotel. Branches are expected to pay these expenses promptly on production of receipts – or in advance in cases of hardship, where the member would otherwise not be able to purchase their fare in advance of a meeting. This applies equally to employed, unemployed and retired members, provided they have paid their subscriptions and UNISON is representing them."

Conference further notes that the Protocol of Handling of Professional Regulatory Conduct Cases (amended 7/11/13) (PHPRCC) states:

(page 2 of 5) Branches will be responsible for:

- 1) "Payment of any specialist report required by the PSU case officer (the need for such a report will be discussed with the branch before hand);"
- 2) "Payment of reasonable travel costs, overnight accommodation and subsistence to the member and witnesses to attend any hearings to attend any hearings and meet with the PSU officer."

Conference recognises that there is inconsistency in the current guidance contained in the COGBP when compared to the PHPRCC:

- a) Whilst the COGBP only refers to legal costs for outsourced work not being required to be met by branches, it is silent on the matter of legal costs met by the head office Professional Services Unit which the PHPRCC makes specific reference to;
- b) That the COGBP says that branches should not normally be expected to pick up costs other than those it would expect to pay an activist to attend a meeting, yet the PHPRCC obliges branches to pay for specialist reports;

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- c) The COGBP only refers to the obligation of branches to pay legitimate costs for members, not witnesses, when UNISON are representing a member at external hearings whereas the PHRCC obliges branches to pay for witnesses, regardless of circumstances.

Conference believes that it is unfair to charge branches for the cost incurred by our central Professional Services Unit for specialist and medical reports. Conference notes that such reports can run in many hundreds of pounds, sometimes thousands, and that branches cannot be expected reasonably to budget for such irregularly occurring matters. Conference further thinks that it is unfair for branches to be expected to automatically and without question pick up expenses for witnesses, who are not members, to hearings or other meetings without being allowed to make any assessment of the benefits of doing so.

Conference therefore instructs the National Executive Council to amend the PHRCC to the following:

Delete under 'Branches will be responsible for':

"Payment of any specialist report required by the PSU case officer (the need for such a report will be discussed with the branch beforehand)"

And move this requirement to section 4 for the obligations of the PSU.

Amend the new first (formerly second) bullet to read –

"Payment of reasonable travel costs, overnight accommodation and subsistence to the member, and any members acting as witnesses in the same case, to attend any hearings and meet with the PSU officer."

And add a new second bullet to read:

"Consider applications from other witnesses to the case of reasonable travel costs and overnight accommodation to attend any hearings and meet with the PSU officer, where failure to pay such expenses may be expected to jeopardise a member's case (i.e. the witness is not in a position to reasonably be expected to meet their own costs or where a witness may be unlikely to attend unless their costs are met)."

Salisbury Health

Legal Services

111. Publicising our successes – conditions of legal assistance

Conference notes that the UNISON case form contains the following clause as being one of the conditions for providing assistance to members with regards to employment related case referrals:

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“12. UNISON reserves the right to use the details of your case and outcome in publicity, case study or learning materials, subject to your name only being used with your permission.”

Conference further notes that the union currently reserves no such right in the case of the outcomes of Personal Injury, Medical Negligence or Criminal Injury Compensation claims and that our solicitors current seek consent from members of the union to publicity on an individual basis only after the outcome of the cases is known. Branches are then informed by our solicitors of the outcomes of such claims as they affect their members and sometimes this can include the statement - “your member has confirmed that she does not consent to publicity”. Conference accepts that branches receiving such information about the denial of consent to publicity after a successful claim can place obstacles in the way of local reps being able to appropriately publicise our successes achieved for their members through our legal services and which can assist the recruitment and retention of members.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to ensure that in future the same conditions for providing assistance with regards to the publicity of the outcome applies to all members using our legal services.

Conference also instructs the National Executive Council to produce guidance for branches on how to appropriately publicise the successful outcomes of our legal cases.

Salisbury Health

Resources

112.A National Case System for Unison

Conference notes that UNISON operates a national system for the recording and processing of casework in branches. The system is paper based and relies on the completion and processing of CASE forms. The systems for doing this vary from branch to branch, with some branches using spreadsheets for summarising and querying cases and some using paper based systems. A small trial has been run in some South West branches (Bristol, Gloucestershire) of a database system designed specifically for handling case work and based on the CASE form. This has generally been successful, but is limited in scope and does not offer benefits to the national or regional union.

In many ways, case data is our critical business information. From it, we can determine and predict: trends in types of case work, time spent on cases, summary information on cases from each branch and region, activity of stewards handling cases and regional support needed for cases to be referred. There is currently no way of easily querying this information coherently at a branch, regional and national level because there is no overarching system to capture and manage the data.

A national database system to handle cases for all UNISON branches would offer significant benefits for the union, enabling us to plan our resources to organise around the issues in every employer, branch and region. The system would be an

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effective organising tool and keep our union at the forefront of the British trade union movement by enhancing our ability to plan strategically using the information collected.

The system should incorporate the following features:

- 1) Linked to the national membership database (RMS);
- 2) Securely accessible from an internet browser and mobile platforms;
- 3) Capture all relevant information for case processing;
- 4) Flexible enough to be adapted to changes in employment law;
- 5) Accessible to activists and branch employed staff and easy to learn.

Conference resolves to establish a committee under the National Executive Council to deliver a national case system for UNISON by 2017. The committee must:

- a) Consult with national, regional and branches to define requirements for the system;
- b) Specify the system;
- c) Commission the most cost – effective provider to build and supply the system;
- d) Manage the contract with the provider to ensure delivery to timescale;
- e) Report to the National Executive Council on progress at regular intervals;
- f) Identify a suitable body to retain responsibility for the ongoing maintenance of the system once installed;
- g) Manage the roll out of the system to users.

Wiltshire Police and Justice

113.Put the money where the fight is

The impact of cuts, privatisation and the academy agenda is increasingly posing a serious threat to the ability of the union to be able to organise and defend its members.

UNISON branches are increasingly facing the fragmentation of their members into many different employers/organisations. Alongside this is the growing attack on union facility time by the employers egged on by the likes of the Eric Pickles and the right wing “Tax Payers Alliance”.

Whilst of course our aim must be to seek to build independent organisation of representatives within each employer to combat this, and we must fight to defend

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and seek to gain paid facility time. However we cannot ignore the reality as it is now, that on the ground many branches are often being held together by a small handful of representatives often from the lead employer struggling with the workload.

There is no point in being told to recruit, recruit and recruit if we cannot provide support and representation to members when they need it, this would amount to taking their money under false pretences.

Conference believes that there needs to be a redistribution of UNISON resources to where the fight is at its sharpest and the frontline is at a branch level so that where necessary branches can have adequate funding to ensure that elected lay reps have the time/money to be able to support the membership.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to come up with proposals that are able to meet this aim.

Bromley UNISON

114.Publication of a Branch Directory

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to ensure that the contact information for all UNISON branches submitted to the Regional Secretary in accordance with Rule G.1.3 (current branch email and postal addresses) is published online and made available to all UNISON members annually.

Lambeth

115.UNISON General Secretary Election

Conference welcomes the periodic election of our General Secretary in accordance with our Rules as an affirmation of the essentially democratic nature of trade unionism.

Conference believes that elections to decide who shall be the principal officer of our union are an important opportunity to engage members and activists in a necessary debate about the future direction of UNISON.

Conference further believes that the maximum member participation in the election of our General Secretary must be encouraged and that a choice between competing candidates is to be welcomed as a sign of the organisational and democratic health of UNISON.

Conference therefore instructs the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Allocate sufficient resources to encourage turnout in any election for General Secretary, whilst ensuring that no union resources are used to campaign for or against any particular candidate;
- 2) Encourage Regions to cooperate to organise hustings meetings at which all duly nominated candidates for General Secretary can answer questions, and to consider broadcasting these hustings online so that members can have more information with which to make this important choice.

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Lambeth

Conference Administration

116. Online Conference database

Conference notes that UNISON used to have a searchable database of all Conference decisions which was available online. Conference believes that this was a valuable resource for policymaking within UNISON. Conference therefore instructs the National Executive Council to ensure that a searchable database of UNISON Conference decisions is accessible to all UNISON members by no later than 31 December 2015, and is updated regularly thereafter.

Lambeth

Member Services

117. Our Membership Forms Need Updating

As a union we are committed to promoting equality and diversity at the heart of everything we do, and we do this well. However when potential new members visit the 'Joining UNISON membership' website, or complete a paper form, they are asked to tick a box for 'ethnic origin' with the accompanying reason:

'UNISON aims to represent all of its membership fairly, whatever their background. If we know how diverse our membership is, we can make sure they are represented in all that we do'.

The potential new members are asked to select his/her ethnic origin from the following categories: Bangladeshi, Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, Asian UK, Asian other, Black African, Black Caribbean, Black UK, Black other, White UK, Irish and White other.

We feel that this is not diverse enough, missing out some significant categories, thus failing to achieve what was set out in principle. For example Dual Heritage.

Secondly the form does not ask a person to specify his or her gender. UNISON is very clear that proportionality is exceptionally important to ensure and promote fairness. How is this monitored/recorded?

- 1) Conference wants additional categories adding to the membership form, to include all ethnic groups, in line with the UK's population: White (White British, White Irish, Any other White background), Mixed (White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian, Any other Mixed Background), Asian/Asian British (Asian Indian, Asian Pakistani, Asian Bangladeshi, Any other Asian Background), Black/Black British (Black Caribbean, Black African, Any other Black background) and Other (Chinese, Any other, not stated);
- 2) Conference wants a tick box system adding to the membership form, for people to optionally define his/her gender.

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We are asking Conference to support this motion, by asking UNISON to amend and update the membership form. Ensuring every new member is clear that Equality and Diversity is at the heart of everything we do.

Humberside Police Support

Rules

Rule C Membership

1. Rule C Annual membership audit, the appointment & removal of the Assurer

Insert new rule C 8:

"C 8 THE UNION'S ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP AUDIT

8.1 The Union's membership system shall be audited each year by an Assurer.

8.2 The Assurer will be a qualified professional body of either financial auditors or membership scrutineers.

8.3 The Assurer will be appointed by the National Executive Council who thereafter shall continue to hold office until replaced by the National Delegate Conference.

8.4 An Assurer must be re-appointed for the following reporting period unless:

8.4.1 A resolution has been passed by the National Delegate Conference expressly stating that they are not to be re-appointed or appointing someone else instead.

8.4.2 The Assurer has given notice that they do not wish to be re-appointed.

8.4.3 They no longer meet the qualifications for appointment.

8.4.4 They are no longer able to act as an Assurer due to incapacity.

8.5 The Assurer will provide a membership audit certificate for the previous financial year to the National Executive Council for approval and adoption."

National Executive Council

Rule D Structure of the Union at National Level

2. Rule D Composition

Delete D 1.3 first paragraph, and insert:

"The basis of representation by branches at the Conference shall be in accordance with a scheme drawn up by the National Executive Council which shall make provision for any branch delegate having to withdraw from participation at Conference by reason of illness, incapacity, family crisis or requirement to return to work under threat of dismissal shall be capable of being substituted by a duly appointed and registered visitor from the branch so affected. This provision is to ensure no branch suffers financial detriment by virtue of the implementation of the

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National Executive Council Guidelines for delegation attendance at Conference falling below 50%."

Insert new D 1.3.1:

"D 1.3.1 The branch substitution shall be overseen and approved by the two Regional Delegates and the Regional Secretary (or nominated deputy) of the Region affected, to ensure reasonableness and fair representation."

Insert new D 1.3.2:

"D 1.3.2 The National Executive Scheme of Composition of branches delegates to Conference shall be implemented by the Regional Committee providing as follows:"

Re-number from D1.3.1 accordingly

Centro Transport

3. Rule D The right to attend and speak

Rule D 1.7.2 delete " Deputy General Secretaries"

National Executive Council

4. Rule D National Executive Council

Add new Rule D 2.9:

"D 2.9 Meetings of the National Executive Council shall take place, so far as is reasonably practicable, in venues which are accessible to all members eligible to attend."

Re-number as appropriate

Lambeth

5. Rule D Service Group Conference

Rule D 3.4.6.2 delete " Deputy General Secretaries"

National Executive Council

6. Rule D Service Group Executive

Add new rule D 3.5.10:

"D 3.5.10 No member who holds a seat on a Service Group Executive can hold a seat on the National Executive Council as a service group representative under Rule D.2.3 at the same time. She/he may stand as a candidate in an election or by-election for a seat on the National Executive Council as a service group representative under Rule D.2.3. If elected, she/he will be a member of the Service Group Executive as defined by Rule D.3.5.9 and will be deemed to have resigned their previous seat on the Service Group Executive from the commencement of the period of office for the National Executive Council seat they have been elected to."

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Renumber subsequent paragraphs accordingly.

*PMT Transport Branch UNISON
Transport East Midlands*

7. Rule D Service Group Executive

D 3.5.8 add at end:

"She/he may stand as a candidate in an election or by-election for a seat on a Service Group Executive, subject to Rule D.2.3.4. If elected, she/he will be deemed to have resigned from the National Executive Council from the commencement of the period of office for the Service Group Executive seat they have been elected to."

*PMT Transport Branch UNISON
Transport East Midlands*

8. Rule D Self Organised Groups

Rule D 4.7.3

Delete the word "send" after "the National Executive Council shall have the right to;" and insert "elect two women members of the National Executive Council to the National Women's Committee and Conference".

Oxfordshire County (L)

Rule E Principal Officers

9. Rule E Deputy General Secretary

Delete E4, E4.1, E4.2 and E 4.3

National Executive Council

Rule F Regions

10. Rule F Regional Council

Rule F 4.4.2

After "annually" insert "or biennially"

Rule F 4.4.4

After "annually" insert "or biennially"

Rule F 4.4.6

Delete "its" and replace with "an". After "Committee" add "The period of office shall be as agreed by Regional Council"

Rule F 5.1.5

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Delete "its" and replace with "an". After "Orders" insert "The period of office shall be as agreed by Regional Council"

Cardiff County Branch

11. Rule F Regional Council

Rule F 4.4.2

After "annually" insert "or biennially"

***Neath & Port Talbot County Br
Rhondda Cynon Taff***

12. Rule F Regional Council

Rule F 4.4.4

After "annually" insert "or biennially"

***Neath & Port Talbot County Br
Rhondda Cynon Taff***

13. Rule F Regional Council

Rule F 4.4.6

Delete "its" and replace with "an". After "Committee" add "The period of office shall be as agreed by Regional Council"

***Neath & Port Talbot County Br
Rhondda Cynon Taff***

14. Rule F Regional Committee

Rule F 5.1.5

Delete "its" and replace with "an". After "Orders" insert "The period of office shall be as agreed by Regional Council"

***Neath & Port Talbot County Br
Rhondda Cynon Taff***

Rule G Branches

15. Rule G Branches

Rule G 2.1.1

After "elected annually" insert "or biennially, dependant on Branch Rules"

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Rule G 3.4.2

After “the coming year” insert” or two years dependent on branch rules”

Rule G 4.1.2

After “annually” insert “or biennially, dependent on branch rules”

Rule G 5.1

After “annually” insert “or biennially, dependent on branch rules”

Rule G 7.1

After “annually” insert “or biennially, dependent on branch rules”

Rule G 8.1

After “annually” insert “or biennially, dependent on branch rules”

***Caerphilly County Branch
Cardiff County Branch***

16. Rule G The Branch Committee

Rule G 2.1.1

After "elected annually" insert "or biennially, dependant on Branch Rules"

***Neath & Port Talbot County Br
Rhondda Cynon Taff***

17. Rule G The Branch Committee

Insert new Rule G 2.1.3:

“G 2.1.3 Such representatives of the retired members’ section within the branch as the branch may determine;”

Renumber subsequent rules.

National Executive Council

18. Rule G Branch Meetings

Rule G 3.4.2

After “the coming year” insert” or two years dependent on branch rules”

***Neath & Port Talbot County Br
Rhondda Cynon Taff***

19. Rule G Branch Officers

Rule G 4.1.1

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After "Young Members Officer" insert "Women's Officer, Black Members Officer, Disabled Members Officer, LGBT Officer"

Oxfordshire County (L)

20. Rule G Branch Officers

Rule G 4.1.1

Insert "Retired Members' Secretary," between "Young Members' officer," and "Welfare Officer".

National Executive Council

21. Rule G Branch Officers

Rule G 4.1.2

After "annually" insert "or biennially, dependent on branch rules"

*Neath & Port Talbot County Br
Rhondda Cynon Taff*

22. Rule G Stewards

Rule G 5.1

After "annually" insert "or biennially, dependent on branch rules"

*Neath & Port Talbot County Br
Rhondda Cynon Taff*

23. Rule G Health and Safety Representatives

Rule G 7.1

After "annually" insert "or biennially, dependent on branch rules"

*Neath & Port Talbot County Br
Rhondda Cynon Taff*

24. Rule G Equality Representatives

Rule G 8.1

After "annually" insert "or biennially, dependent on branch rules"

*Neath & Port Talbot County Br
Rhondda Cynon Taff*

Rule I Disciplinary Action and Appeals

25. Appendix 2 - 4.13

Appendix 2. 4.13

Delete second sentence "The panel may impose any or all of the penalties under Rule I.8 (4) – (6)"

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And replace with "The panel may impose any or all of the penalties under Rule 1.8 (4) – (7)"

National Executive Council

Schedules

Schedule A Rates of Subscription

26. Schedule A Reduced Pay

Insert at the beginning of A 2.2:

"2.2 A member should pay a flat rate of £10 for the duration of any Maternity, Paternity and Adoption leave. Normal subscription is to commence on their return to work."

Bolton Metro

27. Schedule Maternity, Paternity, Parental, Adoption, Dependant Care, Compassionate Leave and other Unpaid Leave

Schedule A 2.3

Amend heading to read: "2.3 Parental, Dependant Care, Compassionate Leave and other Unpaid Leave"

Bolton Metro

28. Schedule A Retired Members

Schedule A 6

Delete at end of first paragraph "£15 life membership." and replace with "£10 per year."

Wiltshire

Motions Ruled Out of Order

Conflicts with an Existing Rule

Motion Public Sector Pay

Conference asks for the National Executive Council to negotiate three year pay deals for those in public sector jobs, especially prior to government elections. This should be easier to budget by central government. Save time for unions to negotiate, rather than yearly, and be a cost saving, when balloting members. In addition, members can work out much easier their personal incomes, career pathways, and expenditures.

This system works well outside the United Kingdom. For example, all health unions in Croatia, (a European Union country) work together and negotiate pay and

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conditions prior to Government Election times. Usually in their circumstances, a three year pay deal is negotiated and awarded in their members favour.

Hastings & Eastbourne Healthcare

Motion Charging branches for the NHS pay ballot

Conference notes that the Health Service Group Executive (HSGE) resolved at two of its meetings in January and February 2015 for there to be a national ballot of members in the NHS on the new pay offer from government, made as a result of our member's industrial action. Conference understands that the HSGE had legitimate reasons why it strongly wished to use this method of consultation in these circumstances which included:

- 1) The wish to ensure that on this important national decision that all member's received a vote, regardless of the capacity of their own branch to arrange a ballot;
- 2) To take the burden off of branches in England to organise a ballot in the tight timescale;
- 3) To ensure that the result was aggregated nationally and that therefore the ballot result was transparent and less open to challenge.

Conference understands that despite the HSGE making this policy decision that it was then denied the ability to use nationally held funds to pay for the national ballot and as a result the HSGE felt compelled to call on branches to fund it retrospectively in order to be able to enact its national policy decision. This was despite the fact that branches were not consulted or asked for their consent to meet the funding of this national ballot in advance of this decision.

Conference is appalled that a National Service Group Executive (SGEs) of our union was denied proper national resourcing when it made an appropriate and reasonable decision to hold a national ballot of members rather than go through regions and branches on this occasion. Conference notes that it is one thing to hold a consultative ballot on a pay award or offer through regions and branches before the union goes in to dispute, but quite another matter to hold a consultative ballot during a national dispute and after a legal industrial action ballot. Indeed conference notes that precedent was already set in 2012 when nationally held funds of the union were used to pay for a national ballot of our members in health when the government made a new proposal on pensions during a period of industrial action.

Conference therefore resolves to:

- a) Instruct the National Executive Council and HSGE to withdraw the request / requirement of health branches to fund the 2015 national consultative pay ballot;
- b) Instruct the National Executive Council and HSGE to refund those branches who may already have paid;
- c) Requires the National Executive Council to ensure that that SGEs are given appropriate and fair access to be able to apply for additional national resourcing for extraordinary matters such as for the funding of national ballots of members

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during a period of official industrial action and that such grants will not be unreasonably withheld.

Salisbury Health

Motion No to Israeli Slaughter in Gaza - Israeli Repression Answered by a Wave of Rage and Protest

Conference notes during July - August 2014 nearly two million residents in the devastated Gaza Strip were bombarded day and night from the air, sea and land, with an estimated 20,000 tons of explosive used. It was the worst bloodshed in the history of the Gaza Strip. Approximately, 2,200 residents were killed, including around 500 babies and children. 100,000 residents saw their homes turned into rubble. This mainly one-sided war between an occupying and besieging regime and an occupied and besieged population also resulted in the death of sixty-seven Israeli soldiers and six civilians in Israel, including a young child.

The war increased Hamas's popularity to its highest level for eight years. On the last day of the war, Israel could not stop Hamas from firing rockets into the Tel Aviv metropolitan area, Gush Dan, where almost half of the population of Israel live. Hamas was seen by a majority of the Palestinians as having led a moral victory against the attacks on the population of Gaza.

Significant Palestinian demonstrations developed during the war in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and within Israel, which were met with a heavy repression. Since the end of the July-August 2014 war, the Palestinian communities in the occupied West Bank and in annexed East Jerusalem have refused to return to so-called 'normal' life under the occupation.

With the background of the horrific death toll of last summer's war and the growing settlement expansion and land confiscation since, there has also been a series of acts of stabbings and vehicles being driven into people, conducted by Palestinian individuals.

The continuing protests and clashes in East Jerusalem were accompanied by massive protests in the Palestinian communities in Israel that erupted after the police killing of Khayr Hamdan from Kafr Kana, an Arab-Palestinian town in the north of Israel. The following day thousands of Palestinians demonstrated. Tens of thousands took part in a one-day popular general strike, declared by the Supreme Committee of the Arab-Palestinian Citizens of Israel.

The newspaper Haaretz reported that Prime Minister Netanyahu reacted to the protests against the police killing by saying: "to all those who demonstrate against Israel and in favour of a Palestinian state, I say something simple: I invite you to move there". Almost all of the attacks on Israelis in Jerusalem ended with on-spot killings of the attackers by the police after they were already captured and immobilised. A Government Minister praised the police killings saying that he wishes that any act of terror will end with the on-spot death of the attacker. Conference notes that this was referring only to Palestinians, as Jewish attackers on Palestinian communities go mostly unpunished.

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At the end of October 2014, the Prime Minister's office announced the Government was proceeding with plans to build more than 1,000 new homes in the Ramat-Shlomo and Ar-Homa settlements in East Jerusalem, aiming to consolidate further the annexation of East Jerusalem and undermine the prospect for a Palestinian state with its capital in East Jerusalem. The government is cynically playing on the yearning of the Israeli residents of Jerusalem for security and stability. With a promise to "restore calm" the government ordered a deployment of 1,000 additional policemen to annexed East Jerusalem, 2,500 troops to the occupied West Bank and increased police presence around the Palestinian communities in Israel.

Conference notes that after almost five decades of systematic discrimination and neglect of infrastructure, and lack of schools, housing and jobs, poverty levels of 78% and unemployment rates of 40% for men and 85% for women have reached the highest point since the start of the occupation in East Jerusalem in 1967. Taking into account the horrific conditions on the ground and the opposition of Netanyahu's government to any significant concessions in the West Bank or Gaza, it seems that a new uprising on a mass scale - a third intifada - is just a matter of time.

Conference notes that the Fatah-led Palestinian Authority has a policy of 'security cooperation' with the Israeli army which means the holding back and suppression of protests. Conference also notes that the main concern for the Hamas leadership is the stabilisation of the situation in Gaza through reaching new arrangements with the Israeli regime on the one side and the Egyptian regime on the other, via Fatah.

Whilst Conference supports the recognition of the Palestinian state which helps to expose the policies of the Israeli regime it also believes there is also a clear limitation to the Palestinian Authority diplomatic campaigning.

Conference believes that mass demonstrations in the occupied Palestinian territories can win solidarity worldwide and potentially reignite the revolutionary struggle in the region, particularly in Jordan and Egypt. Those mass demonstrations can also change the outlook and win support from a significant section of Israeli society. Polls show that support for Netanyahu's government policies is not strong. Public support for Netanyahu dropped from 82% at the beginning of the war, to around 40% at its end. If there were any other party or politician that could appear as an alternative to Netanyahu, to solve the problems of the national conflict, and also of the widespread economic hardship, that drop would have been even more drastic.

The feeling of a lack of economic security and anger at poverty wages and high costs of living, which led to the mass social protest movement in 2011 and the unprecedented workers' unionisation wave in recent years can deepens the division between the Israeli working class and the ruling elite.

The war has aggravated the slowdown in economic growth in Israel and budget cuts have been carried out. These economic attacks has created anger at the economic situation, which were temporarily marginalised during the war, expressed in one poll that indicated that 60% of the Israeli public opposed increases in the security budget at the expense of health, education and welfare.

Conference believes that the level of support for renewal of the 'peace talks' among Israelis is an indication of the dissatisfaction with Netanyahu's government and that

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real peace talks are only possible only with the ending of the occupation, the siege, the settlement project and all other forms of exploitation and oppression of the Palestinians.

Currently, there is distrust amongst the Palestinian people towards any proposed 'solution' for the national conflict: about 60% of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza hold the view that a 'two states' solution is not implementable because of the West Bank and East Jerusalem colonial settlements, while over 70% oppose a 'one state' solution.

Conference believes that a solution to the crisis in Israel / Palestine cannot be resolved on the basis of capitalism.

Conference reaffirms its support for the Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to issue a statement supporting:

- 1) The removal of the Israeli Defence Force from the Palestinian territories;
- 2) The ending of the Israeli Government siege policy on Gaza;
- 3) Equal rights of both Palestinians and Israelis to existence, genuine security and self-determination, without oppression of other peoples;
- 4) An independent, democratic socialist Palestinian state alongside a democratic socialist Israel, and equal rights for minorities, as part of the struggle for a socialist Middle East and regional peace.

Nottingham City UNISON (L Gov)

Motion Pay

Conference notes:

- 1) That average annual household income declined by £1,600 during the five years of the previous Tory/Lib Dem Coalition government;
- 2) That real earnings for all workers dropped by 14% under the previous Tory/Lib Dem coalition;
- 3) That income declined much more sharply for public sector workers, by about 18%, during the same period;
- 4) That the wealthiest in society continued to enjoy rising incomes during the same period; for example, the richest 1,000 people in Britain saw their wealth increase by 15.4% to a total of £519bn between 2013 and 2014 – double the total of their wealth in 2009, just before the Tories took power.

Conference further notes the legacy of rising inequality under the previous government, so that, for example, the richest fifth of households saw their income

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grow by £940 between 2011/12 and 2012/13, while the disposable income of all the other groups fell by around £250, with the poorest fifth of households' income fell by £381; the richest fifth of households had an average gross income of £81,300 in 2012-13, almost 15 times greater than the poorest fifth who had an average income of £5,500 (both figures before taxes and benefits.)

Conference also notes that members in health supported national strike action in England on 3 days during the last pay round, while members in local government also backed the union's call last autumn for a national strike over pay.

Conference is disappointed that, despite signs of recovery in the economy over the last year, the incoming government appears committed to continuing cuts and austerity, and in particular appears committed to maintaining the squeeze on members' pay through below-inflation pay rises, as well as by attacking unsocial-hours pay in the health service.

Conference therefore resolves that the union should lodge substantial pay claims in all sectors (subject to decisions and aspirations at sector conferences) that seek to recover some of the significant sums lost to inflation under the previous Tory-led government's pay-freeze policies.

Conference believes that to achieve this, sustained legal national industrial action within and across service groups and bargaining units will be necessary.

Conference further resolves to approach other appropriate trade unions to win support for this policy.

Birmingham UNISON Branch

Motion Future pay claims £10 an hour minimum wage

Conference welcomes the decision of the 2014 Trades Union Congress to support the claim for a rise in the national minimum wage to £10 per hour. We believe that £10 an hour is a necessity for the millions of working people who have suffered years of wage restraint and inflation outstripping pay rises.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to ensure that the £10 per hour minimum is included in all future pay claims lodged by UNISON negotiators including evidence to the national pay review bodies.

Mid Yorkshire Health

Could place the union in legal jeopardy

Motion UKIP

Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

Portsmouth City (L)

Motion Stand up to UKIP

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Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

Nottinghamshire County

Motion Defend the NHS

Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

Nottinghamshire County

Motion Defend the NHS

Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

York City Branch

Motion Stand Up To UKIP

Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

York City Branch

Motion Stand Up To UKIP

Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

London Fire & Emergency Planning Authority

Motion Defend the NHS

Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

London Fire & Emergency Planning Authority

Motion Stand Up to UKIP

Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

Birmingham UNISON Branch

Motion Defend the NHS

Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

Islington UNISON (M)

Motion Stop Sourcing Products From Companies Employing Unethical Practices

Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

Police Staff Scotland (UPSS)

Motion End the Management Consultancy Scandal

Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

Mid Yorkshire Health

Motion Stand up to UKIP

Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

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Islington UNISON (M)

In breach of Rule D.2.10 Employment of Staff

Motion In Focus (out of focus)

Conference recognises that UNISON is a broad church of radical political views and is proud its members has recently voted to maintain its political levy.

Conference notes UNISON's political fund is divided into the APF (Affiliated Political Fund - Labour Link) and General Political Fund (GPF). Conference also notes that the GPF is the larger in terms of membership but acknowledges the right of the APF to propagate on behalf of the Labour Party.

However, Conference also recognises, with dismay, the blatant propaganda on behalf of Labour Party being printed in the In Focus magazine which is the UNISON monthly magazine for all activists.

Whilst the majority of members wish(ed) to see the end of the vicious Con Dem government they did not want it to be replaced with another government committed to austerity and cuts.

Therefore Conference calls on the editorial board of In Focus to only print articles by politicians, trade unionists, members, celebrities and guests who support the immediate implementation of UNISON's policies to end austerity, end all cuts, invest in services and agree to fair pay and the Living Wage.

Dorset County

Motion Review Managers in Partnership

Conference notes that it is over ten years since UNISON set up a joint arrangement with the First Division Association (FDA) to create a new 'union organisation' called Managers in Partnership (MiP). Conference further believes that the time has come for there to be an open, transparent and inclusive review and debate about MiP.

Conference asks whether in fact the joint partnership with the FDA which created MiP has created a 'union within a union' because whilst MiP members are part of UNISON, MiP operates like a separate union in many ways. For example in the recent national ballot over the NHS pay offer the UNISON Health Group Executive made no recommendation to members on whether to vote to accept or reject the offer, whilst MiP recommended to its members to reject.

Conference questions whether the consequences of the formation of MiP has been to set up organisational issues that run contrary to the founding principles of UNISON namely:

- 1) Equity of representation, treatment and organisation of members regardless of their professional status;
- 2) That we are one union with one voice for all health and public service workers.

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Conference also notes that the creation of MiP has created divisions between members in our Health care service group and that this has led to representational issues which do not help the function and unity of our great union.

Conference notes that:

- a) Since MiP was founded, the agreement between UNISON and the FDA has never been shared with UNISON branches, despite requests from lay reps for the protocol to be disclosed to them;
- b) That MiP has its own identity and branding and has separate seats to UNISON on various national bodies, such as the NHS Staff Council, and that it often makes its own pronouncements in the media without reference to UNISON;
- c) That MiP members are placed into a national branch of the union, rather than into local health branches like most other members, which takes primary responsibility for appointing UNISON representatives on consultative committees. The vast majority of health employers have no MiP 'contacts' or 'stewards' within them but it is UNISON reps on local consultation committees, who are appointed through local health branches, who have no knowledge of who MiP members are in their employer and therefore these MiP members often have no direct link with collective consultation or negotiation structures in their own employer. As a result such members in MiP suffer from a democratic and representational deficit when compared to other UNISON members;
- d) Members in MiP are normally advised and represented by employed officers of the union who are based regionally or nationally, which is a different arrangement to that offered to most other UNISON members in the same workplaces who rely on lay representation;
- e) Members in MiP are generally not collectively represented by democratically elected lay members on regional or national health committees. MiP members therefore have no say on our union's regional or national health organisation or policy;
- f) MiP has its own policy making process and can in theory come to different policy positions to the wider union, for example its recommendation to its members over NHS pay in 2015;
- g) If we think that MiP is the right organisation model for senior managers in health care, why not other service groups? MiP has created an inconsistency in the way that our union organises senior manager members across service groups. Senior managers in health, despite them being subject to many of the same local bargaining process as other members in health, are allocated to a national branch of the union whereas, for example, senior manager members in local government are still allocated to local branches;
- h) Many clinical staff have jobs which encompass some senior management functions but it is currently unclear exactly where the boundary is between a senior clinical member who is still allocated to a local health branch and those with greater senior management functions who are allocated to the national

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branch of MiP. Allocation of members to the national branch of MiP normally happens without consultation with either the member or the local health branch;

- i) Members who join UNISON rather than MiP are automatically allocated to MiP and currently have no absolute right to opt back into their local branch of UNISON;
- j) MiP does not undertake a lot of employer based recruitment, unlike local health branches who provide the activists and finances to run the events and local campaigns from which MiP may benefit;
- k) With MiP members being allocated to a national branch they are dissociated from many other local union campaigns and activities largely run by local health branches;
- l) MiP as a national branch has no links to local Trades Union Councils or links through Labour Link to Constituency Labour Parties and this is contrary to national UNISON approach for all other members.

Due to these issues and concerns, Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to hold a review of the existing establishment, operations and function of MiP during 2015/16 involving:

- i) MiP;
- ii) Health branches and regional health committees;
- iii) The Health Service Group Executive;
- iv) Regional Committees;
- v) Any other part of the union as is deemed appropriate.

The National Executive Council are advised to consider asking as part of the review whether we should:

- A) Retain MiP as it currently exists,
- B) Retain MiP and extend it to other service groups;
- C) Change the operation and structure of MiP;
- D) Dissolve MiP and terminate our agreement with FDA;
- E) Any combination of the above or any other changes that may be necessary.

Conference requires the National Executive Council to produce a report of the outcomes of the review and make recommendations on the future of MiP to the 2016 National Delegate Conference.

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Motion UNISON Centre

Conference notes that UNISON owns a large and under-utilised headquarters building in the Euston Road. Given the financial pressures upon the union, Conference believes that it is time to review our accommodation requirements, particularly when we have kept some of the UNISON Centre empty for several years.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to conduct an options appraisal to determine whether UNISON's interests would be better served by moving to smaller premises in London, by co-locating the headquarters and Greater London Regional Offices, by maximising rental income from letting out the vacant space at the UNISON Centre or by some other means, reporting on progress to National Delegate Conference 2016.

Lambeth

In breach of the agreement on the political fund

Motion Devolve UNISON'S Political Fund to Scotland

Conference notes the changed political situation in Scotland in light of the continued consequences of the referendum on independence. It is now very likely that more UNISON members in Scotland are now members or supporters of other political parties than are members or supporters of the Labour Party. Conference also notes the strong support given by UNISON Scotland's Labour Link Forum to the losing candidate in the Scottish Labour Party Leadership elections and the disappointment expressed amongst trade union activists at the election of Jim Murphy.

Conference therefore agrees that the National Executive Council should bring forward proposals to the 2016 UK National Delegate Conference to restructure UNISON's Political Fund to allow UNISON Scotland to support and promote other political parties and candidates whose policies are consistent with UNISON Scotland policy.

City Of Glasgow Branch

Not competent

Motion Branch Retention

Conference agrees to increase the basic retention rate for branches to 22%.

Kirklees Local Government

Motion Branch Funding

Conference believes since the formation of UNISON there has been a massive shift in the responsibility of branches in terms of recruitment and organisation of members.

Instead of dealing with mainly one core employer some branches now have to deal with hundreds of individual employers.

2015 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

The vast majority of case work, representation and negotiations on behalf of members is done at branch level, not national level.

Branches are also now called on to carry out extensive work in relation to membership registers with in many cases significant related costs.

Conference believes that the current basic funding allocation to Branches of 23.5% is wholly inadequate.

Conference agrees:

- 1) From 1 January 2016 the base level of members subscriptions to all Branches shall be 26% with all existing additional amounts in relation to various factors remaining as per current arrangements;
- 2) To instruct the National Executive Council to bring forward proposals for further transfer of resources from national to branch level and submit them for consideration of the 2016 National Delegate Conference.

Manchester Branch

Not in line with SOC procedures

Motion Legal Equality Facility Time

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 equality reps have no legal right to time off to undertake their trade union equality duties. The TUC argued in a 2005 submission to the former Women and Work Commission 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.

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’ quality 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 though less than half of equality reps surveyed were women (46%), this was unsurprising given that the role is largely undertaken by reps with other established roles due to the lack of specific time off. However it was

2015 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

also noted that 63% of those who had not had previous rep experience were women which indicated that the role was playing a part in attracting more women members into union activity.

Conference notes that it is important that we continue to work towards involving more women members in UNISON's structures within the WET service group and in representational roles. The equality rep role is one which many women would be attracted to, if facility time was available, and may assist in creating a less segregated workforce, with more opportunities available to women workers.

The activities that equality reps undertake include:

- 1) Providing advice and information on equality matters;
- 2) Encouraging and supporting workplace diversity and fairness;
- 3) Workplace mapping and tackling discriminatory patterns;
- 4) Assisting with flexible working;
- 5) Supporting and advising members on sexual harassment issues;
- 6) Encouraging discussion of sex equality issues on the collective bargaining agenda.

This matter is especially important for UNISON given that nearly three quarters of our members are women, a majority of whom are low paid. The lack of equality facility time is therefore directly discriminatory and is also indirectly discriminatory in that women's time is heavily pressurised due to caring responsibilities.

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

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

- a) The increased use and impact of zero hour contracts on women;
- b) Segregation of 'women's' work into low pay jobs and the need for a living wage and pay equity plans;
- c) Employer sickness absence monitoring resulting in 'survival of the fittest' and the particular impact on older women;
- d) Lack of affordable and accessible child care;
- e) An increase in stress and mental ill health on women.

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Conference calls upon the service group executive to work with the National Executive Council, Labour Link and other appropriate bodies within UNISON to seek the influence the next government to extend paid facility time to equality reps.

National Women's Committee

Motion Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership

Conference notes that the European Union (EU) and the United States have started secret negotiations on a new trade agreement, the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), which could serve as a model for all future trade agreements.

However, history has shown that its women are unduly penalised when trade agreements aimed at “liberating” inter-country trade are signed. In fact, the North American free trade agreement (NAFTA) model of trade liberalisation has proven harmful to women in all three signatory countries. By not addressing the impact on women’s lives and livelihoods, any new trade agreements could have significant negative consequences for women in both the USA and EU. Under TTIP, women’s access to essential services such as healthcare and education and their access to workplace rights could be severely limited.

TTIP won’t just remove trade tariffs but would also harmonise regulatory standards; open markets in the service sector which could include public services covered by the WET service group; open up public procurement markets; and introduce the investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) mechanism allowing multinational investors to challenge state actions which they perceive as threatening their investments and further erode the ability of national governments to act in the public interest.

Conference therefore agrees to campaign for the rejection of the TTIP drawing particular attention to the serious danger it poses to public services and the threat posed by the ISDS mechanism to the public interest.

Conference, therefore, calls on the service group executive to:

- 1) Work with the NEC, STUC and TUC to campaign against TTIP;
- 2) Use the campaign against TTIP to strengthen links with sister unions in the United States;
- 3) Raise our TTIP concerns with all political parties, in particular working via Labour Link to raise these issues with the Labour Party in the UK and the European parliament;
- 4) Work with the NEC to highlight TTIP’s real threat to women’s rights.

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2015 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

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National Women's Committee

Not sufficiently clear

Motion Palestine

Conference is horrified at Israel’s 51-day assault on the Gaza Strip in July and August 2014, its third in six years and most bloodthirsty to date. 2,143 Palestinians were killed, 11,000 were injured, 108,000 had their homes destroyed.

Conference regrets the loss of 72 Israeli lives but has no truck with the idea that Israel may exercise any right to self-defence thus or that self-defence was its aim.

Conference believes that it is urgent UNISON step up work to implement policy on Palestine determined by earlier conferences, in particular to contribute more to the campaign for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS).

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It notes recent successes of the BDS campaign. Two targeted companies appear to be considering withdrawing from Israel; major retailers say they no longer source from settlements; shops set up to sell settlement goods have closed.

Conference recalls its resolutions of 2012 and 2013 and welcomes the proposals adopted by the National Executive Council's International Committee in September 2013 to:

- 1) Make the Russell Tribunal on Palestine findings available through the UNISON website;
- 2) Work with Communications to set up a 'mini-campaign' website aimed at promoting UNISON policy on BDS;
- 3) Work with the Pensions Unit to look at how the governance structures of the Local Government Pension Fund can be used to implement UNISON policy on divestment and;
- 4) Work with the Services to Members Committee to issue guidance to UNISON's affinity partners.

Conference also welcomes the committee's adoption in November 2014 of its 2015 work programme which identifies Palestine as a priority and includes:

- a) Working with Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) to develop a campaign tool kit for pension fund divestment from companies complicit in the occupation that can be taken up by branches;
- b) Supporting PSC to develop the trade union network launched at the TUC in September 2014.

Conference also notes that, as a result of approaches by members of PSC and other local campaigners, the Pensions Committee of the West Midlands Pension Fund, at its meeting on 10th December last, considered its investments (amounting to £150 million) in companies making profits from violations of international law by Israel in Palestine. As a result of the UNISON observer's intervention, the committee did not adopt an officer recommendation that its fiduciary duty required it to take no action but has agreed to delay a decision on the matter and to seek advice. Conference congratulates those involved in this initiative, urges similar initiatives elsewhere and instructs the National Executive Council to offer appropriate support.

Even so, Conference is concerned that three of the September 2013 proposals have yet to be implemented. It instructs the National Executive Council to do so.

Conference also recalls that its resolutions of 2012 and 2013 instructed the National Executive Council to develop guidance for branches on campaigns to stop public service contracts being let to companies which are complicit in Israeli violations of international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, for instance by contracts which service the illegal settlements, construct the Apartheid Wall or provide security in prisons holding Palestinians illegally transferred from the occupied Palestinian territories to Israel.

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But Conference is also concerned that no guidance has been issued so it confirms and repeats this instruction.

Conference recognises the increasing significance of academic, cultural and sporting boycott. In a public relations bid called “The New Hasbara”, Israel promotes areas of excellence in its society to distract people abroad and get them to admire Israel and defend it. An example is to portray Israel as progressive and civilised on account of how it claims to treat lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people and to misuse LGBT struggles to attack the Palestinians and demonise surrounding countries. Conference commends the work of the UNISON LGBT Group in this area and that of the ‘No to Pinkwashing’ campaign. It instructs the National Executive Council to offer appropriate support.

West Midlands Region

Motion Co-operating with other unions

Conference asks for the National Executive Council to continue working closely with other unions in the United Kingdom and the Trade Union Congress (TUC.) In addition, we ask for them to seek information from European unions, and co-ordinate strike action, when necessary.

Hastings & Eastbourne Healthcare

Motion Branch funding

Conference rightly prides itself on UNISON being a lay-led trade union.

Conference notes that branches are not merely at the heart of this union’s lay democratic structures, but also at the very heart of how this union organises its members, campaigns and bargains for its members and in our communities, recruits new members, and provides an individual casework service to its members.

Conference notes that due to shifts in the terrain UNISON operates within since its inception in 1993, branches are increasingly of central importance in the provision of that support to, and servicing of, members. Increasingly localised bargaining and reduction of employers in national bargaining arrangements also point to this.

Since 2010, increases in collective reorganisations at local level due to cuts in central government expenditure and privatisations, as well as commensurate increases in individual casework and a generally tougher approach to individual issues by employers, have all shifted the burden of work further onto branches.

Conference notes that facility time of lay activists has also come under attack since 2010, and in that time UNISON has not agreed a response which sees the resource lost through these attacks replaced.

Conference notes the continuing need for branches to campaign for their members, whichever party is in government after May 7th 2015.

Conference notes that our trade union must live within its means. This means a review must be undertaken to prioritise union activity and expenditure at regional and

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national tiers in order to free up sufficient funds as are necessary to support branches in their critical work, the success or failure of which will determine the future of our union.

Conference therefore calls for:

- 1) A new scheme of funding to be in operation by 1st January 2016, based on the following principles:
 - a) Any branch with more than £15 per full member in Branch Reserves at the annual point of calculation will not qualify for additional funding;
 - b) All other branches will receive an increase in the proportion of base member subscriptions from 23.5% to 26.5%;
 - c) All additional percentage enhancements will remain unchanged.
- 2) A review of national and regional activity, with the full participation of lay members and under lay member control, will be conducted during the remainder of 2015, so as to prioritise union activity and expenditure at those tiers with a view to reducing or ceasing activity and expenditure which is not affordable.

West Sussex (L)

Received past the deadline

Motion Implementation of Union Inspection Notices within UNISON

In 2010 the government announced that by 2014 the HSE would have had to reduce its budget by approximately £80–85m a year. This was a cut of around 35% in the state contribution. However further cuts announced since then mean that the total reduction in the amount of government money will be in excess of 40 %. To counter this, the HSE has attempted to increase external income fees and charges. If the HSE were to meet its target for external income, the reduction in overall budget from 2010 will be 13 per cent by 2014/15. Its last annual report (2012/13) shows that it is falling short of that by £6m, meaning that the overall reduction is likely to be greater.

This is having a huge impact on the role of UNISON health and safety representatives as the HSE are no longer proactive but can only be reactive when Health and safety issues arise, Day by day there are continuing pressures on health and safety reps in the workplace now more than ever, as they are the only proactive form of identifying Health and safety risks and making sure that control measures are put in place by employers to keep UNISON members safe.

UNISON health and safety representatives need to be able to have more evidence for the HSE in the event that they need to be called into a workplace after an accident has taken place that they had given the employer every chance to rectify the risk and implement control measures to reduce the risk. Union inspection notice (UIN) is a formal notice issued to a manager by an accredited trade union safety representative. It registers that the employer is not complying with health and safety legislation in respect of an identified workplace hazard, it also describes the action,

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which must be taken to comply with the law and specifies a date by which action must be taken.

Conference calls to support the implementation in the use of UINS within workplaces and train health and safety representative to be able to effectively use them, helping to make safer workplaces now and for the future for UNISON members.

North Wales Ambulance

Requiring a rule change

Motion Voice for first time speaker at Conference

Conference supports the following rule change:

Conference proposes that first time speakers should (on approaching rostrum control), be given a paddle to hold as they sit and wait their turn to speak, either in favour or against a motion that says "first time speaker" and the chair person should have the right to call a first time speaker during the debate, at any time, with prudence, as they would ask for a platform speaker. Fresh speakers would bring fresh ideas. This would further advance democracy within UNISON.

Nottinghamshire County

Withdrawn by submitting body

Motion Fair representation for Disabled Members in UNISON

Conference is concerned about the level of discrimination currently faced by disabled people. Cuts to public services, welfare reform, changes to health and social care, reductions in disabled students allowances and bedroom tax have all targeted disabled people.

To fight this campaign against disabled people disabled people need to be politically and societally active. We need to ensure that disabled people are heard at all levels of society including within our own union. Branches and regions need to be encouraged to support Disabled Members Self Organised Groups and encourage disabled members to become activists and this work should be led from a national level.

UNISON's rules state that the National Executive Council must include fair representation for women as well as reserved seats for Young Members and Black Members. This is a credit to our union and confirms our commitment to fighting discrimination.

But Conference is concerned that these same positive steps have not been taken to support disabled members in their fight against discrimination. We commend UNISON's excellent work to promote equality for disabled people. We recognise

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there are disabled members on the National Executive Council but they are there to represent their service group or region not disabled members. There is still a considerable amount of work to be done if our disabled members are to fight prejudice, discrimination and achieve equality and this can only be done if we are represented at all levels including on the National Executive Council.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with the National Disabled Members Committee, other self organised groups, region, branches and service groups to promote the benefits of having disabled reserved seats on the National Executive Council;
- 2) Work with the National Executive Council and National Disabled Members Committee to develop a process for the nomination process and selection of candidates;
- 3) Submit a rule amendment to the 2016 National Delegate Conference in time for the 2017 National Executive Council elections.

National Disabled Members Committee

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2015 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

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- 3) Submit a rule amendment to the 2016 National Delegate Conference in time for the 2017 National Executive Council elections.

National Disabled Members Committee

Rule Amendments Ruled Out of Order

Conflicts with an Existing Rule

Rule Amendment Rule C Employees of The Union

Rule C 2.9.3

Delete Rule 2.9.3 "Members in this category shall have the right to vote in any political fund ballot."

Bolton Metro

Rule Amendment Rule D Elections

Rule D 2.6.1

After "National Delegate Conference" delete "two years later" and replace with "the following year"

Neath & Port Talbot County Br

Rule Amendment Rule D Elections

Delete Rule D 2.6.2

Neath & Port Talbot County Br

Rule Amendment Rule D Proportionality and Fair Representation

Rule D 1.4

Insert after first sentence "Branches should strive to meet this balance. Where Rule D 2.12.3 demonstrably cannot be met a member of the Branch membership may attend National Delegate Conference."

Police Staff Scotland (UPSS)

Rule Amendment Rule D Service Groups

D 3.1.1

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Under "There shall be the following Service Groups within the Union:" replace the words "Higher Education" with "Post-16 Education"

City & Islington College (M)

Could place the union in legal jeopardy

Rule Amendment Schedule C Elections

Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

Dorset County

Rule Amendment Rule D Employment of Staff

Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

Dudley General UNISON

Rule Amendment Schedule C Elections

Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

Lambeth

Rule Amendment Rule P Standing Orders for Conferences

Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

Lambeth

Rule Amendment Rule P Standing Orders for Conferences

Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

Lambeth

Rule Amendment Rule D Functions and Authority

Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

East Lothian Council

In breach of Rule D.2.10 Employment of Staff

Rule Amendment Rule E Deputy General Secretary

In Rule E 4.1 delete "who shall be appointed by the National Executive Council."

Lambeth

Rule Amendment Rule E Deputy General Secretary

Add new Rules E 4.4 and E 4.5:

"4.4 The Deputy General Secretary shall be elected and shall hold office for a period of five years. The requirements for membership and/or employment and for nominations laid out in respect of the election for General Secretary in Rule E.3.2 shall apply equally to candidates for election as Deputy General Secretary.

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4.5 The requirements in respect of the ballot for election of General Secretary set out in Rule E.3.3 shall apply equally to the ballot for election of Deputy General Secretary."

Lambeth

In breach of the agreement on the political fund

Rule Amendment Rule J After the Interim Period

Rule J 8.2

Delete at end of sentence "and paid up individual members of the Labour Party"

Bolton Metro

Rule Amendment Rule J After the Interim Period

Rule J 8.8

After "National Executive Council shall", delete all and replace with "allocate the relevant contribution to the General Political Fund".

Bolton Metro

Rule Amendment Rule J After the Interim Period

Rule J 8.6

Add new rule 8.6:

"8.6 No expenditure from the Affiliated Political Fund Section shall be made on behalf of or in the interests of any candidate or any representative who does not promote policies that are in line with the political objects."

Re-number remaining accordingly.

Bolton Metro

Rule Amendment Rule J After the Interim Period

Rule J 8.5

Delete all after "objects"

Bolton Metro

Rule Amendment Rule J After The Interim Period

Rule J 8.2

Delete "the exclusive control of"

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Add at end: "As from 1 January 2016 the National General Political Fund Committee shall comprise of 6 members from the National Executive Committee and 1 member from each Nation / Region elected through Regional structures. All member of the Committee must be contributors to the General Political Fund."

Manchester Branch

Not competent

Rule Amendment Rule F Regional Council

Rule F 4.4.4

After "annually" insert "or biennially"

Rule F 4.4.6

Delete "its" and replace with "an"

After "Committee" add "The period of office shall be as agreed by Regional Council"

Rule F 5.1.5

Delete "its" and replace with "an"

After "Orders" insert "The period of office shall be as agreed by Regional Council"

Caerphilly County Branch

Not sufficiently clear

Rule Amendment Rule D Composition

Delete the first paragraph and replace with:

"The basis of representation by branches at the Conference shall be in accordance with the scheme drawn up and ratified by the National Executive Council and implemented by the Regional Committee which shall make provision for any branch representing delegates who can be substituted by shared and / or visitor delegates in the event of them having to withdraw from participation, once Conference has commenced, by reason of illness, incapacity, a family or home emergency or a requirement to return to work under threat of dismissal, so that UNISON's Rules D 1.6 and F 6.1 on 'proportionality, fair representation and equal opportunities' can be best achieved. Such delegates shall be capable of being substituted by a duly appointed and registered delegate from the branch so affected. This provision is to ensure that delegates can vote on behalf of their branch members in accordance with that commitment to proportionality, fair representation and equal opportunities at all sessions to best achieve the union's constitution. It will also ensure that no branch suffers any unnecessary financial detriment by virtue of the implementation of the National Executive Council guideline for delegations at Conference falling below 50% and providing as follows:"

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Insert new D 1.3.1

"A branch substitution shall be overseen and approved by the two Regional Delegates and the Regional Secretary (or nominated deputy) of the Region affected to ensure reasonableness to be able to vote on behalf of the Branch Members in accordance with our union's constitution."

Insert new D 1.3.2

"The National Executive Council Scheme of Composition of branches' delegates to Conference shall be implemented by the Regional Committee to ensure reasonableness to be able to vote on behalf of the Branch Members in accordance with our union's constitution.

Renumber accordingly.

Insert new D 1.6

"SHARED DELEGATES

Where a branch or grouped branches have the right to be represented by only one delegate the branch or grouped branches may, in order to promote proportionality, fair representation and equal opportunities elect two members to share the delegation between them. Where a branch or grouped branches have the right to be representatives by more than one delegate, the branch or grouped branches may, in order to further promote proportionality, fair representation and equal opportunities, elect two members to share one delegate seat allocated to the branch or grouped branches. For branches with more than two representing delegates, branch delegates can be substituted by 'shared' and /or 'visitor' delegates in the event of a family or home emergency occurring as outlined in Rule D 1.3 above once Conference has commenced. Any substitutions can only be overseen and approved as outlined in Rule D 1.3.1 above."

Insert new F 6.1

"PROPORTIONALITY, FAIR REPRESENTATION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITES

The principles of proportionality, fair representation and equal opportunities as defined in the Rules shall apply to all the above elections, all the Service Group Conferences and at National Delegate Conference."

Caerphilly County Branch

Rule Amendment Rule E President

Rule E 1.2

Delete rule and replace with:

"1.2 The President shall be elected for a term of two years by a secret postal ballot of the membership, which shall include retired members, conducted by a Returning

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Officer independent of the Union. The electoral rules in Rule D.7 and Schedule C shall apply to such elections.”

Bolton Metro

Rule Amendment Rule E Vice-Presidents

Rule E 2.2

Delete rule and replace with:

"2.2 The Vice-Presidents will hold office for two years, and will be elected by a secret postal ballot of the membership, which shall include retired members, conducted by a Returning Officer independent of the Union. The electoral rules in Rule D.7 and Schedule C shall apply to such elections."

Bolton Metro

Rule Amendment Schedule C Elections

Schedule C.1

After “General Secretary,” insert "President, Vice-Presidents,"

Bolton Metro

Rule Amendment Rule E President

Rule E

Delete Rule E1.2 and replace with “The President shall be elected for a term of one year by the general membership.”

Kirklees Local Government

Rule Amendment Rule E Vice-Presidents

Rule E

Delete Rule E 2.2 and replace with “The Vice-Presidents shall be elected for a term of one year and will be elected by the general membership.”

Kirklees Local Government

Rule Amendment Rule E Vice-Presidents

Rule E

Delete Rule E 2.4 and replace with “The general membership shall elect the President and the Vice-Presidents at the same time provided that two of the three shall be women.”

Kirklees Local Government

Rule Amendment Rule G The Branch Committee

Add new G 2.1.4 "Women's Officer, Black Members' Officer, Disabled Members' Officer, LGBT Officer all of whom must self-identify with the specified characteristic."

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Isle of Wight LG

Rule Amendment Rule G Branch Officers

Add new G 4.1.2

"G 4.1.2 Women's Officer, Black Members' Officer, Disabled Members' Officer, LGBT Officer all of whom must self identify with the specified characteristic."

Renumber rest of Rule G 4 accordingly

Isle of Wight LG

Rule Amendment Rule The Branch Committee

Delete Rule G 2.1.2

Insert new Rule G 2.1.2 "G 2.1.2 a Women's Officer, Black Members Officer, Disabled Members Officer, LGBT Officer all of whom must identify with the specified characteristic and any additional self organised group members as the branch may determine."

Oxfordshire County (L)

Received twice

Rule Amendment Rule D Service Group Executive

Rule D

Add new rule:

"No member who holds a seat on the Service Group Executive can hold a seat on the National Executive Council as a service group representative under Rule D 2.3 at the same time. She/he may stand as a candidate in an election or by-election for a seat on the National Executive Council as a service group representative under Rule D 2.3. If elected, she/he will be a member of the service group executive as defined by Rule D 3.5.9 and will be deemed to have resigned their previous seat on the Service Group Executive from the commencement of the period of office for the National Executive Council seat they have been elected to."

PMT Transport Branch UNISON