



UNISON Conference Bulletin

January 2016

Local Government Service Group Conference 2016

Conference Team

020 7121 5123

This bulletin contains the timetable and information for
2016 Local Government Service Group Conference.

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

Local Government Service Group Conference 2016 will be held at the Brighton Centre starting 9.30am Sunday 19 June, ending 5pm Monday 20 June 2016

The Brighton Centre
Kings Road
Brighton
East Sussex
BN1 2GR

Tel: 01273 290131 Fax: 01273 779980

Web: www.brightoncentre.co.uk

Timetable

Deadline for Submission of Motions	12.00 noon	Friday 26 February 2016
Publication of Preliminary Agenda	-	Friday 18 March 2016
Deadline for Submission of Delegates	5.00pm	Friday 1 April 2016
Deadline for crèche places	5.00pm	Friday 15 April 2016
Deadline for reasonable adjustment requests for access	5.00pm	Friday 15 April 2016
Deadline for Submission of Amendments	12.00 noon	Friday 22 April 2016
Publication of Final Agenda	-	Friday 20 May 2016
Deadline for Emergency Motions	12.00 noon	Friday 10 June 2016
Deadline for submitting Change of Delegates online on the OCS	5.00pm	Wednesday 15 June 2016

Enclosed with this Conference Bulletin, and available for download on the conference webpage <https://www.unison.org.uk/events/local-government-conference-2016/> are:

:

Delegate Travel Form
Visitor Travel Form
Advice from Standing Orders Committee

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- If you already have an e-mail address and access to the UNISON website, the quickest way to update your details is to go to the UNISON website and click 'My UNISON' – you will need your UNISON membership number.
- If you don't have an e-mail address or don't have access to the UNISON webpage, you

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

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

Key contacts:

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

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

Region	Contact	Tel	E-mail
Eastern	Amanda Tickner	01245 608909	a.tickner@unison.co.uk
East Midlands	Mark Ward	0115 847 5408	m.ward@unison.co.uk
	Colleen Forrest (Thurs & Fri only)	0115 847 5468	c.forrest@unison.co.uk
Greater London	Shelley Davey Lorraine Tant Cally Thompson	0207 535 6648	glrconference@unison.co.uk
Northern	Allison Jackson	0191 245 0805	a.jackson2@unison.co.uk
Northern Ireland	Elizabeth Robinson	02890 270190	e.robinson@unison.co.uk
North West	Val Rothwell	0161 661 6701	v.rothwell@unison.co.uk
Scotland	Rosaleen Rodgers	0141 342 2816	r.rodgers@unison.co.uk
	Caroline Philip	0131 226 0075	c.philip@unison.co.uk
South East	Kieran Pearson	01483 406510	k.pearson@unison.co.uk
	SE Communications Team	01634 285719	communicationsteam@unison.co.uk
South West	Jenn Gollings (Mon – Thurs only)	01823 285336	j.gollings@unison.co.uk
Cymru/Wales	Sarah Evans	01792 483923	s.evans@unison.co.uk
West Midlands	Claire Kenny	0121 685 3174	c.kenny@unison.co.uk
Yorkshire & Humberside	Laraine Senior	0113 218 2333	l.senior@unison.co.uk

Disenfranchised Branches

Branches are reminded that under Rule D.1.3.3.1 you will be disenfranchised from sending delegates to attend National Delegate Conference and Service Group Conferences for the remainder of the financial year following the year to which the financial return applies, if you

did not submit your annual financial returns (Rule G.10.1) to your UNISON regional office by no later than **15 March each year**.

National and Regional Representation

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

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

Branch Representation

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

Representation is based on membership as at **30 September 2015**.

Proportionality and Fair Representation

The NEC's Development and Organisation Committee (D & O) has reviewed the Scheme of Branch Representation for National Delegate Conference (NDC) and agreed the Scheme for 2016. The Committee has also stated that the NDC Scheme should in future apply to all Service Group conferences, as there remains an ongoing concern about the under-participation of groups such as young and low paid members and women and Black members in particular.

The branch representation levels remain unchanged (see above). Below are the requirements for ensuring proportionality and fair representation of branch delegations to Local Government Conference 2016.

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

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

When calculating proportionality, each sharer counts as one delegate.

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

Fitness to Attend Conference

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

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

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

Transgender Members

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

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

Data Protection

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

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

Extras

From now on, requesting 'Extras' such as Childcare, Reasonable Adjustments or Facilitators on the Online Conference System (OCS) can only be done by the registered delegate themselves. Once a delegate is registered, the OCS will automatically send out an e-mail to the person with a web link which they can click on to access the OCS and input the Extras they require. For any assistance please contact your regional conference contact from the list on page 3 of this bulletin.

Appeals

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

Change of Delegate

Branches may change delegates up to the start of Conference. A member registering as a substitute branch delegate must have been eligible to represent the branch at the closing date for registration of delegates **Friday 1 April 2016**. Any changes must be in accordance with the Scheme of Branch Representation.

After **5.00pm Wednesday 15 June**, no more changes can be made on OCS. If a branch needs to make an emergency change to its delegation after this date then an Emergency Change of Delegate form will need to be completed.

This form will be available on the UNISON website from **Thursday 16 June** and will also be available at the regional pre-conference delegates meeting for Local Government Conference. The form will also be available from the conference desk at the Brighton Centre.

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

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

Crèche and Babysitting

Please note that crèche provision is available **for delegates only** for children up to the age of 16 years. Arrangements have been made for Nipperbout, the company contracted to provide crèche facilities at all UNISON national conferences, to provide babysitting. Should you require this service please complete the request online by **5pm, Friday 15 April 2016**. Delegates are reminded that the cost for babysitting is borne by the branch so authorisation is required from your branch secretary that this expenditure will be approved.

Reasonable Adjustments

UNISON aims to provide a fully accessible event to disabled members in accordance with our duties under the Equality Act. Requests for reasonable adjustments must be

submitted online by **5pm, Friday 15 April 2016**. For personal assistance/facilitation, authorisation is required from your Branch Secretary that this expenditure will be approved.

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

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)

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

Important Travel Arrangements

Branches are asked to book all travel arrangements for Conference through Stewart Corporate Travel. Travel application forms are attached to this bulletin. Wherever possible, please ensure train tickets are delivered to you directly as collecting them from stations incurs an extra charge. Branches are reminded that:

- Travel costs for **Delegates and Sharer 1's only** will be funded from National Office.
- Travel costs for **Visitors and Sharer 2's** must be paid for by the branch. **This is in line with Rule D.I.6. on shared delegates.** *Please note that a booking fee is applicable – further details from Stewart Corporate Travel.*

Accommodation

Branches are encouraged to arrange accommodation through Brighton's Accommodation Booking Service, VisitBrighton. Using the Booking Service supports the work of our members in local government and ensures our continuing ability, as a not-for-profit organisation, to secure preferential rates for our conference venues. For full details of current available and for bookings please go to:

<https://resweb.passkey.com/go/bunc2016>

You can also email: delegates@visitbrighton.com or telephone 01273 292626

Advice on Submission of Motions

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

The Preliminary Agenda will be published on Friday 18 March 2016. The Final Agenda will be published in newspaper format and online on Friday 20 May 2016. The motions and amendments will also be included in the Conference Documents which are sent to all delegates in June 2016.

UNISON Local Government Service Group Conference, Sunday 19 June – Monday 20 June 2016, Brighton Centre

DELEGATE RAIL TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM

Please read the guidelines overleaf before completing this form.

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

Branch Name _____ Branch No. _____

Branch Address _____

Additional Travellers

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Journey Details

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

Please tick the appropriate boxes

Ticket Type Single Return Flexible Fixed

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

Do you hold a Travel Discount Card? Y/N

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

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

Name _____	
Address _____	

Tel No. _____	E-mail _____

Listed below are contact details for STEWART CORPORATE TRAVEL:

Tel No: **0800 091 4272**

Fax: **0141 226 2960**

E-mail: unison@stewarttravelmanagement.com

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

GUIDELINES: DELEGATE RAIL TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM

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

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

**UNISON Local Government Service Group Conference,
Sunday 19 June – Monday 20 June 2016, Brighton Centre
DELEGATE AIR TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM**

Please read the guidelines overleaf before completing this form.

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

Branch Name _____ Branch No _____

Branch Address _____

Additional Travellers

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Journey Details

OUTBOUND FLIGHT

DATE: _____ TIME OF FLIGHT: _____

JOURNEY FROM: _____ TO: _____

RETURN FLIGHT

DATE: _____ TIME OF FLIGHT: _____

JOURNEY FROM: _____ TO: _____

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

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

Name _____	
Address _____	

Tel No. _____	E-mail _____

Listed below are contact details for STEWART CORPORATE TRAVEL:

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

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VISITORS RAIL TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM**

Please read the guidelines overleaf before completing this form.

Visitors Name _____

Branch Name _____ Branch No. _____

Branch Address _____

Additional Travellers

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Journey Details

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

Please tick the appropriate boxes

Ticket Type Single Return Flexible Fixed

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

Do you hold a Travel Discount Card? Y/N

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

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

Name	_____
Address	_____ _____
Tel No.	_____
E-mail	_____

Listed below are contact details for STEWART CORPORATE TRAVEL:

Tel No: 0800 091 4272

Fax: 0141 226 2960

E-mail: unison@stewarttravelmanagement.com

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

GUIDELINES: VISITOR RAIL TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM

1. Please complete in block capitals
2. All information should be entered in its entirety as omissions may result in errors or delays. **Please note that as part of UNISON's current travel policy Stewart Corporate Travel will endeavour to obtain the cheapest available tickets; this will restrict any changes being made after booking, so please ensure all details entered are accurate.**
3. Stewart Corporate Travel will invoice the Branch direct for all visitors travel. This travel will not be met from National Funds.
4. One form should be completed per Visitor.
5. Any children or personal assistants accompanying you should also be entered on your form in the spaces provided. Children must be under 16 years of age and their age indicated on the form.
6. If you are unsure of the time of travel please put the time you wish to travel and Stewart Corporate Travel will book the cheapest option available nearest to these times.
7. If you hold a Travel Discount Card such as the Young Persons/Student, Disabled or Elderly Card please advise Stewart Corporate Travel where indicated. Please note if doing this you will need to take the card with you when you travel.
8. Wherever possible, please ensure train tickets are delivered to you directly as collecting them from stations incurs an extra charge. Please ensure you enter your full address including the postcode in the box provided. This is the address your tickets will be delivered to.
9. Please give a contact telephone number where you can be contacted during office working hours i.e. 9am to 5pm or an e-mail address if available. This is in case Stewart Corporate Travel needs to contact you regarding your booking requirements.
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 - Date of travel, both outward and return
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VISITOR AIR TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM**

Please read the guidelines overleaf before completing this form.

Visitors Name _____

Branch Name _____ Branch No _____

Branch Address _____

Additional Travellers

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Journey Details

OUTBOUND FLIGHT

DATE : _____ TIME OF FLIGHT : _____

JOURNEY FROM: _____ TO: _____

RETURN FLIGHT

DATE: _____ TIME OF FLIGHT: _____

JOURNEY FROM: _____ TO: _____

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

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

Name _____	
Address _____	

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8. Please give a contact telephone number where you can be contacted during office working hours i.e. 9am to 5pm or an e-mail address if available. This is in case Stewart Corporate Travel needs to contact you regarding your booking requirements.
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3rd Floor
Sterling House
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Glasgow G2 5AP

Local government group conference 2016: advice from standing orders committee

The standing orders committee (SOC) has prepared this advice to assist branches and other bodies in submitting motions and amendments for the 2016 local government conference. It outlines the criteria used by the standing orders committee in considering whether motions and amendments will be admitted to the conference agenda – whether they are ‘competent’.

In brief, motions must be:

- From a body entitled to submit motions to local government conference
- About a matter relevant to the local government service group
- Clear and including specific proposals for action
- Submitted via the online conference system (OCS)
- Within the specified deadlines: 26 February for motions and 22 April for amendments
- In line with UNISON rules.

Who can submit motions?

UNISON rule P.1.3.5 sets out which bodies which are eligible to submit motions to service group conferences. For local government conference, these are branches within local government, the local government service group executive, regional local government committees and national local government sector committees. In addition, national self-organised groups and the national young members’ forum may submit up to two motions and two amendments.

Submitting motions using the OCS

There is advice in the conference bulletin on how to submit motions using UNISON’s online conference system (OCS). Only the branch chair or branch secretary have OCS permission to submit motions. Branch employed staff can enter motions on the OCS but do not have authority to submit them on behalf of a branch. Please make sure motions are entered onto the OCS and submitted in plenty of time before the deadline.

The standing orders committee has reaffirmed that, for branches, only the texts of motions which have been considered by a branch meeting, or a branch committee meeting, are eligible for submission to conference. Local branch rules that delegate powers to other bodies will not be taken into account when applying the national rule requirements for conference.

Therefore branches must state clearly on the motion form the type of meeting at which their motion was agreed. Meetings must be quorate. This may be checked, particularly in relation to emergency motions.

The date of the meeting which decided to submit the item should be recorded on the OCS, together with the type of meeting.

Subject matter – service group issues

Motions, amendments and emergency motions submitted to the agenda for local government conference **must** be relevant to the local government service group.

Motions may instruct the local government service group executive but may not commit the union nationally to a particular policy or campaign. Motions that are relevant to the union as a whole should be sent to national delegate conference.

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

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

Citizenship issues

Some issues which appear relevant to the local government service group may actually be 'citizenship' issues, of relevance to the whole union. This is because members experience the issues as workers **and** as members of the public or as service users.

Motions to local government conference must only have relevance to local government service group workers as workers. For example, a motion on school meals could call for a campaign to improve the pay and conditions or training opportunities for school meals staff. It may not call for a campaign on the provision of school meals as such - this would be a national delegate conference matter.

A number of motions are ruled out each year on these grounds. If in doubt - seek advice.

Staffing issues

Motions on staffing matters are not appropriate for local government conference debate. The national executive council and the general secretary have responsibility for the employment of staff, under Rule D.2.11.1 and Rule D.2.11.2.

Industrial action

Rule O gives the national executive council exclusive power to authorise industrial action. To be lawful, industrial action must be in relation to a trade dispute as defined by s.218 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. Motions calling for industrial action over privatisation or 'the cuts' do not fall within the legal definition of a trade dispute and so must not be debated as this would put the union in legal jeopardy. Motions relating to industrial action must not contravene Rule O on industrial action or Rule B.4.5 which requires the union to act lawfully. Motions or amendments must not describe previous or current disputes as being 'against privatisation' or similar words, as this could leave the union open to legal challenge.

Affiliated political fund/Labour Link

Matters relating to the Labour Party, both in relation to internal issues and in respect of matters to be pursued at Labour Party conference, are properly dealt with by Labour Link through its own structures, not local government conference.

Legal reasons

Motions may be ruled out of order due to a number of legal reasons. These include legal jeopardy – where a motion places the union at risk of legal action from a third party. The standing orders committee will not enter into protracted legal arguments on whether or not this third party would have a strong case, but will take the decision not to place the union at risk. Legal jeopardy will also apply when the motion refers to or is relevant to current legal proceedings against UNISON or individuals acting in a UNISON capacity.

A motion will be ruled out if it is considered to be in breach of UNISON rules. For example, it may breach our values as set out in Rule B or our rules on legal representation in Rule K.

Trade Union Bill

At the time of printing, the Trade Union Bill is being considered in Parliament. Please take the matters raised in the Bill into consideration when drafting motions. Depending on the outcome of the Bill, the SOC may need to issue further advice to ensure the union meets its obligations.

Calls vs instructs

Branches should be aware that the SOC sees a distinction between motions that **call on** another body or part of the union to do something and one which **instructs** them. When using 'instruct', submitters of motions should be clear that local government conference does indeed have the power to instruct this body and that the body being instructed has the power to undertake the action. Also, with motions that call on a union body to 'ensure' an action takes place, the SOC will check that it is within their power to do so. If in doubt, branches should use the phrase 'seek to ensure'. Even when using 'call on', submitters should check conference has the power to call on this body and the body has the power to undertake the action.

Pension schemes

Individual occupational pension schemes are normally debated as bargaining issues at service group conferences but submitters are reminded that the local government pension scheme has membership across more than one UNISON service group.

Rule P.1.3.6

Rule P.1.3.6 gives the standing orders committee the power to recommend to conference that if a motion only affects the devolved bargaining groups of Scotland, Northern Ireland, England and Wales, voting on that motion may be restricted to delegates from those groups.

The standing orders committee is keen to avoid the situation where part of a motion applies to the whole service group and part to a particular pay bargaining group. An example would be where a motion on general pay policy is amended to refer solely

to the NJC pay agreement. This can cause confusion at conference, as delegates may be able to vote in one part of the debate and not another.

Please bear this in mind when drafting motions and amendments so it is clear whether it applies to the whole service group or only certain bargaining groups.

Amendments

Amendments are subject to the same rules as motions. In addition, they should not be used to introduce an entirely new matter or as a substitute for voting against a motion. Amendments are likely to be out of order as wrecking amendments if they:

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

Emergency motions

Only matters of a genuine emergency to the local government group will be admitted on to the agenda as emergency motions.

The submitting body must show:

- The matter could not be raised in debate on the agenda
- The action called for is not covered by another motion, amendment or composite
- The facts giving rise to the subject matter have occurred since the closing date for the submission of amendments to motions: it is not enough that the branch was unaware of the facts until after the closing date
- The subject cannot be dealt with through normal channels other than local government conference.

The motion should be accompanied by an explanation of why it was not submitted in accordance with the normal procedures and deadlines. Submitters should bear in mind that many matters can be dealt with by the region, branch, or service group executive and do not require a conference decision to be actioned.

The same requirements in relation to branch meetings apply to the agreement of emergency motions. Details of the quorate meeting at which it was agreed must be provided. Branches which submit emergency motions during conference will have to provide the standing orders committee with details of their branch rules covering advance notice for convening meetings and branch quorum. The SOC will not take into account delegated powers within branches.

Challenges to SOC decisions

If the SOC rules your motion or amendment out of order, you will receive notification including the reasons why, via the online conference system (OCS). If you are not happy with the decision and want the SOC to reconsider, you must contact us in writing **via the OCS**. Please remember it is not possible to reword a motion after the deadline, to make it competent.

Deadlines for appeals against motions ruled out of order:
12.00 noon Tuesday 19 April 2016

Deadlines for appeals against amendments ruled out of order:
12 noon Tuesday 31 May 2016

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

Further advice

The standing orders committee hopes this advice will assist submitting bodies prepare motions for conference and reduce the number ruled out of order.

If you have any queries, please seek advice from your regional local government SOC or contact:

Carola Towle
Secretary, local government conference SOC

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0207 121 5241

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