

2016 National Delegate Conference

UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Brighton Centre

21 Jun 2016 24 Jun 2016

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

Organising and Recruitment

Organisation and Development

1. An Organising Response To The Trade Union Bill

Conference believes that the Trade Union Bill is best understood as a political attack on trade unionism. All unions will be affected by restrictions on their ability to undertake industrial action and political campaign activity, and will be subject to greater scrutiny by the Certification Officer. Public sector trade unionism will be especially hard hit by additional strike ballot thresholds, the DOCAS ban and likely attacks on facility time arrangements.

Conference believes that the government's focus on attacking public sector trade unionism at the beginning of the Parliament constitutes an attempt to diminish opposition to their planned programme of cuts to public services, job cuts, worsening of terms and conditions and privatisation.

Conference believes that the Bill is designed to strike at UNISON's central nervous system – making it much harder for us to operate as an organisation. The Bill attacks our main source of income (DOCAS), our main means of supporting members (facility time), and our ability to be a campaigning union (political fund restrictions) and as such constitutes an existential threat to our union.

Conference believes that it is essential that UNISON responds to this threat through face to face workplace organising supported by a range of innovative campaign methods. In the coming months, the provisions in the Bill will require us to:

- 1) Re-double efforts to build strong workplace organisation across the union;
- 2) Get DOCAS-payers in public sector employers to complete direct debit mandates;
- 3) Get existing members in all employers to consent to supporting our union's campaign work;
- 4) Make the case that facility time in the public sector is invaluable to the well-being of employees, employers and the wider public.

Conference believes that these challenges will require an unprecedented mobilisation within workplaces. It will require a highly visible UNISON presence and effective face-to-face conversations with our members and potential members. It will require extensive planning, mapping and coordination. It will require existing activists

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and new activists to exhibit tremendous energy, discipline and perseverance. Conference believes that the Trade Union Bill necessitates an acceleration in UNISON's ongoing journey towards becoming an organising union.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Ensure that branches and regions have the necessary resources and materials to enable a large-scale mobilisation:
 - a) Across public sector workplaces, to switch existing members and new members to direct debit;
 - b) Across all workplaces, to promote the UNISON political funds and the ability of the union to campaign effectively;
- 2) Assist branches and regions to make the case that facility time in the public sector is good value for employees, employers and the wider public;
- 3) Ensure that building stronger workplace organisation is a key component to all campaign activity;
- 4) Campaign for the repeal of the Trade Union Bill/Act.

North West Region

2. Organising for Growth in the Community and Voluntary Sector

Conference notes that the Community and Voluntary sector is a growing part of the delivery of public services.

Conference notes that many employers in this sector have little track record or culture in dealing with trade unions. As a consequence there are many instances where employees suffer from poor terms and conditions of employment as well as far from acceptable standards of dignity at work and enforcement of health and safety standards.

Conference notes UNISON Scotland's Organising for Growth Strategy, which is informed by previous resolutions of National Delegate Conference and the experience of other regions, has delivered key gains in the Community and Voluntary sector including the living wage, and new recognition and procedural agreements, Working Time Directive arrangements and new employment contracts across a range of employers in the Community and Voluntary sector. This initiative has driven up levels of recruitment and organisation by taking up a number of campaigns on a range of issues of concern to members such as employer tolerance of violence towards staff by clients and provision of suitable clothing.

Conference also notes that the Community and Voluntary sector often involves dealing with smaller bargaining units than is the case in many other areas where UNISON organises and so initial efforts at creating or building organisation may need proportionately greater resources than some other areas.

Conference resolves to:

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- 1) Make recruiting in, organising with, and delivering for workers in the Community and Voluntary sector a key priority for UNISON;
- 2) Examine the experience of UNISON Scotland's Organising for Growth strategy with the aim of developing a UK wide approach to recruiting, organising and bargaining in the Community and Voluntary sector based on the successes of the Organising for Growth model applicable across UNISON.

Scotland Region

3. Increasing young womens' attendance at National Delegate Conference

Conference notes that the numbers of young women members attending have been very low and that it is vital work is undertaken to address this.

Conference also notes the scheme of branch representation requiring branches sending four delegates to include a young member in their delegation.

Conference further notes that National Delegate Conference offers learning, educational, political, cultural, and social opportunities that can contribute to young women's personal development and as UNISON activists.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to adopt the following measures in respect of National Delegate Conference 2017:

- 1) Issue a statement to all branches:
 - a) Stating that all branches should make efforts to send a young member to National Delegate Conference, regardless of whether the scheme of branch representation requires them to do so, and to encourage that this place be filled by a young woman;
 - b) Encouraging them to make direct contact with all young women members in their branch and encourage their participation in the branch and to take up delegate opportunities in all UNISON conferences;
 - c) Encouraging more experienced members to relinquish delegate positions if that makes it possible for a young member to attend;
 - d) Calling for Conference visitor places to be made available to young women members.
- 2) Publicise this through the union's communication channels including social media;
- 3) Liaise with the National Young Members Forum about reaching out to young women through their networks;
- 4) To publish in the 2017 annual report the numbers of young women members registered to attend in 2017 as (1) delegates and (2) visitors, comparing it with numbers attending this year in those capacities, and all future annual reports to maintain a 'rolling table' of this information so that Conference is kept informed about any progress made.

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National Young Members' Forum

4. Supporting our activists who have to deal with stressful situations

Conference notes that being a trade union activist has always been difficult and stressful as we regularly deal with members who face difficult and challenging situations.

Conference further notes things have got much tougher in recent times with the pressures of dealing with the impact of austerity on our members, service users and our union.

Sometimes we face members who are suicidal or suffering mental and emotional breakdown. We do our best to support them but we are then left with our own emotional scars and there is nowhere to go to. Regional Office staff often do their best to support us but we recognise they are not trained counsellors or trained in how with such issues.

Some employers offer an employee counselling service that some activists can access. However, not all employers do and sometimes it is not appropriate to use the employer's counselling service.

The result of this lack of support for activists is, at best the mental and emotional health of our activists is being damaged, and at worst activists are suffering burnout and withdrawing from union activity.

There is a desperate need to improve the support the union provides our activists. Conference therefore instructs the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Investigate the possibility of setting up a telephone support service staffed by trained counsellors who can support activists who are facing pressure;
- 2) Develop and deliver a programme of resilience training for activists that can be delivered in regions;
- 3) Produce a handbook for activists on how to deal with stressful situations and how they can support branch colleagues.

***Coventry City
Staffordshire***

Recruitment and Organising

5. Bullying and Young Members

Conference notes with great concern the high number of our young members experiencing bullying and harassment within workplaces. In a recent survey conducted by the Scottish Young Members Committee it was found that 75% of our young members had experienced bullying and harassment of some variety. 7% of the 75% had experienced violence in the workplace.

Conference also notes that over 50% of these cases were not reported. The most common answer why was that our members did not know what was classed as bullying and harassment. Where cases were reported only 5% received any support.

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The health implications for our young members experiencing bullying and harassment are wholly negative. They include mental health issues such as anxiety, stress, and depression as well as physical problems such as headaches, stomach and skin conditions. These lead to periods of long term sick and a number of our young members have even contemplated or attempted suicide.

The Scottish young members committee therefore recently launched their bullying and harassment campaign 'Gonnae No Dae That' and produced a guide for young workers to raise awareness of the issues and provide details of how UNISON can help and support them.

Our young members are just starting out in their career. They should be positive about their future and supported in the workplace. However in the midst of unprecedented cuts the likelihood of bullying of our young members is set to continue.

Conference therefore welcomes the awareness campaign by the Scottish young members committee and calls on the National Executive Council to support branches, regions and young members committees across the UK to develop materials to aid the recruitment of young workers and to highlight the support that UNISON can offer to those young people who are bullied in the workplace.

South Lanarkshire

Education and Training

6. Strengthening Our Union: Supporting and Developing Our Stewards

Whilst UNISON can claim that we have an activist's base of 50,000, all valuable roles and essential for creating a strong organised union, Conference notes that we have lost a significant number of experienced activists particularly our traditional steward's as a consequence of the austerity agenda and the relentless privatisation of public services since 2010. Conference welcomes the fact that in 2015 there was an 18% increase in the number of new stewards recorded on RMS (UNISON's membership system) compared to 2014. Additionally the percentage of these new stewards that had attended the organising stewards course, and were therefore ERA (Employment Rights Act) accredited by the end of 2015 was also slightly up on 2014 figures. However the historical data for the last 5 years indicates that the percentage of new stewards attending training within 12 months of being entered on to the RMS on average is less than 30%.

RMS data reports that 68% of stewards are ERA accredited and that a sizable minority of stewards currently are untrained and remain so for a number of years. Additionally RMS reports that there are over 11,000 contacts, of which over 2,600 are based in schools.

UNISON's organising strategy recognises that the union organises in a rapidly changing environment of public service delivery, increased privatisation, fragmentation of services, continual public sector reform presented challenges in the ways that we traditionally recruited, trained and developed activists. A number of initiatives and developments aimed at recruiting and supporting new stewards have been successfully implemented including:

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- 1) Modularising and flexible delivery of our organising stewards training and other core activists' courses;
- 2) Extended provision of online and blended organising stewards training;
- 3) Flexible and tailored resources including short workshops, E-learning, and workplace contacts course;
- 4) Tailored projects to meet the challenges presented in recruiting and organising activists such as the national Housing Association project which established a developmental approach targeting support and encouragement from the point the potential activist expresses an interest;
- 5) Use of resources that acknowledge the occurrence of race discrimination in the workplace, e.g. Race Discrimination Claims Protocol and Challenging Racism in the Workplace.

There is no doubt that these initiatives are working, however year on year the union at regional and national level examine what other reasons sit behind the consistently high level of untrained stewards and workplace contacts, anecdotal evidence indicates that a significant number of these activists find the traditional forms of activism to be daunting, this is particularly so for the private sector, schools and C and VS sectors. Yet these activists do play a role and have a valuable contribution to make in supporting UNISONs recruitment and organising strategy.

Conference notes that for UNISON to continue to meet the challenges of organising in an ever changing environment and be able to deal with further attacks on activist's facility time, the TU Bill and reduction to trade union funding, then it is essential that the union continually review how we recruit, train and support stewards and other activists.

Conference is also concerned that many trade union studies departments in further education colleges, where we also have members, have either closed or are facing closure, further limiting training opportunities.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Encourage branches through the Joint Branch Assessment to dedicate resources, establish targets that embed within their branch development plans activity that will support other forms of activism to strengthen and grow the union in particularly these plans should:
 - i) Support and resource self organised and young member groups at branch and regional level recognising the valuable role they play in building confidence and developing skills amongst members thereby encouraging them to become activists and stewards;
 - ii) Promote and support UNISONs member development programme alongside organising initiatives such as Team UNISON to build confidence and the skills base amongst members' thereby creating a route into activism.

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- b) Recognise that UNISON's current systems and accreditation requirements for new stewards to become recognised by the union and therefore their employer is by attending the five day Organising Stewards course can act as a barrier for workplace contacts and untrained stewards participating more fully in UNISON. It also creates a situation where these activists cannot access training and support that would provide them with the skills to support their members in the workplace on recruitment, organising and campaigning issues.

In order to address this situation Conference agrees to:

- A) Review the current Organising Stewards course, ensuring that the modules are more accessible in order to increase the number of trained activists;

Each module will be supported by “how to do” resources to build on skills acquired through training. These resources will be developed by Learning and Organising Services and will include e-notes / webinars as well as traditional resources.

- B) Review the current National Executive Council scheme for the accreditation and training of UNISON Stewards / workplace reps, with a view to introducing a stage 1 accreditation upon completion of the appropriate modules of the Organising Stewards course;

Upon completion of all modules, stewards would acquire the appropriate skills and training to represent members in accordance with the Employment Rights Act 1999.

- c) Continue to extend e-learning to supplement and support face to face training for stewards, by introducing further blended face to face and distance learning;
- d) Encourage regions and branches to establish mentoring systems to support and develop new activists.

National Executive Council

7. Supporting Stewards during times of Austerity

Conference applauds the work that our army of stewards, health and safety, learning and equality reps do on a daily basis to support and defend our members in the workplace. These individuals do all of this on a voluntary basis and often do many of these activities in their own time.

At a time when we are experiencing not only unprecedented cuts in public services but also the attacks on our ability to organise as workplace representatives through the Trade Union Bill, the demands on our lay representatives become more stressful.

Pressures to reduce the workforce, through “natural wastage” can mean increased numbers of cases and individual cases becoming more complex. Additionally our representatives have increased pressures in their own jobs which mean that it can be more difficult to get dedicated facilities time.

Conference recognises that many branches have set up mechanisms to support reps to deal with their workload and this is to be welcomed. However, these are the

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initiatives of individual branches and are likely not to give a true perspective of the nature of the workload that our lay representatives are dealing with and how they are managing to achieve a work / life balance.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with regions and LAOS to establish what support mechanisms currently exist and are being used for representatives;
- 2) Work with regions, LAOS and self organised groups to determine whether there is a need for further support mechanisms to be put in place.

Lanarkshire Health

8. Trade Unions and Further Education Studies

Conference notes the encouraging steps being taken to bring apprentices into union membership. Young members are the future of the trade union movement. It is vital that work continues to share knowledge and understanding of the role unions play in society so young people can relate to trade unions and engage in activities from the earliest opportunity.

Conference called on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign for the incorporation of trade union education into the delivery of Citizenship Studies;
- 2) Support branches covering further education establishments to explore opportunities to promote trade unionism as part of the democratic process;
- 3) To create and make available literature aimed at 16 to 19 year olds highlighting the key principles of the trade union movement.

Broadland

Branch Development

9. Supporting Shared Branch Resource Centres

Conference recognises that the challenges of the fragmented workforce have been enormous for our union. Conference understands that there will continue to be more and more of our members employed within that fragmented workforce – already more than 25% of our members in the Eastern region.

Conference is confident that the union will meet this challenge as well as all other threats to our organisation and capacity to support public service employees in the workplace. That's what unions are for, that's what we do and what we will continue to do.

Conference believes that we should take a dynamic and proactive approach to creating and supporting local organisational structures and arrangements that meet the needs of our members.

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Conference congratulates those who have already committed time, effort and financial resources to establishing locally based “shop front” centres that are accessible to members and potential members as well as activists and staff. These centres will provide a range of administrative and representational services to branches and members freeing up activists to use their increasingly limited and precious time to organise within our membership and potential membership to build a strong and effective union.

Conference has no doubt that UNISON should be encouraging shared branch working across the UK as an effective use of resources.

Conference therefore resolves that the National Executive Council must ensure that:

- 1) As a matter of priority, a branch guide to establishing shared branch resources is produced and issued. The guide should contain advice on managing such projects, finding and procuring appropriate premises, financial planning and joint financial accountability. This list is not exclusive and the content should draw on the expertise of those who have already been involved in this activity;
- 2) Consideration is given, within the Branch Resources Review, to the development of an appropriate funding formula that includes UK, regional and branch contributions to sustainable shared resources;
- 3) UNISON publications are used to regularly showcase the positive work of the shared branch resources.

*Eastern Region
Queen Elizabeth Hospital Kings Lynn*

10. Code of Good Branch Practice

Conference agrees that the Code of Good Branch Practice is a valuable resource to branches, used in conjunction with the UNISON Rule Book.

Although the UNISON Rule Book is regularly amended and updated on a yearly basis, the Code of Good Branch Practice is not amended or updated as frequently.

Therefore, Conference calls on the National Executive Council to ensure that:

- 1) The Code of Good Branch Practice is updated biennially;
- 2) Branches are encouraged, where possible, to access the Code of Good Branch Practice electronically, to keep the cost of production to a minimum.

Derbyshire County

11. Electronic Use of the National Rule Book

Conference believes that the mass production of the Rule Book each year comes at a high cost.

Most branches and regions have the use of technology and the ability to receive these documents electronically.

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Therefore, conference calls on the National Executive Council to, wherever possible, encourage branches, regions and activists to access the UNISON Rule Book electronically, to keep the cost of production to a minimum.

Derbyshire County

Participation

12. My Union, Your Union, Our Union: Encouraging Engagement

Conference notes that UNISON members are facing unprecedented attacks and challenges including to our pay, terms and conditions, benefits and living standards. Meanwhile we are expected to do more for less, covering unfilled and deleted posts, while services we rely on disappear and housing costs spiral.

At a time when workers need their union more than ever, the hostile Tory government has made strenuous efforts to attack and undermine our right to represent our members and effectively negotiate on their behalf. This includes attacks on facility time, on our right to take industrial action and on the union's ability to communicate with and collect subs from our members. Despite the complete lack of evidence of any 'problem' to justify these attacks, the Tories are waging a clever propaganda war, aimed at making people feeling isolated and weak. They want us to believe that we are not 'worth it', but we're not buying it.

Conference believes that the only response to this onslaught is to redouble our recruiting and organising efforts, bringing together the best of our tried and tested and our newer strategies. We must continue to emphasise the collective nature of our movement and our demands, but at the same time we must engage directly with individual members and potential members.

Conference welcomes the proven potential of our equality organising, including self-organisation, young members organisation and migrant workers networks, and of community campaigning. Amongst other benefits, these can bring a collective union identity to members in isolated and fragmented workplaces. For example, over the last twelve months, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) members have been staffing stalls at community events across the United Kingdom, engaging with existing members, encouraging activism and recruiting new members. Conference reaffirms its belief that "like recruits like".

Conference acknowledges that one single way of spreading our messages will not reach all of our intended audiences. As workforces are increasingly fragmented and attacks on facility time bite, workplace union meetings are harder to organise and in some workplaces are non-existent. We need to engage with our members and potential members one to one, outside the workplace as well as in work, and online as well as face to face. We must continue and expand our use of the website, social media and other online tools, such as the UNISON app, Organising Space and Team UNISON – the online skills bank.

However, conference notes that these can only be effective if members are signed up and using them, keeping their contact information up to date. Correct membership information is also crucial because hostile governments and employers

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seek to exploit out of date membership data to challenge the validity of industrial action ballots.

Conference therefore welcomes the introduction and promotion of confidential sexual orientation and gender history monitoring on UNISON's membership database, the RMS, via members' personal point of access - My UNISON. While monitoring in isolation does not equal change, its introduction as part of UNISON's well developed LGBT equality work sends a clear signal that the union takes its LGBT members and LGBT equality seriously. This builds on the anonymous monitoring of LGBT participation in UNISON structures, conferences and activities, such as training, that has been practiced for a number of years. This expansion of My UNISON can encourage members to update other fields on the database where data is incorrect or missing, including ethnic origin, contact details and subs information, protecting our union from hostile attacks.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to advertise and promote engagement with My UNISON, encouraging members to update their personal information, including completing the new sexual orientation and gender history fields;
- 2) Further develop the use of web-based tools to assist with our recruiting and organising objectives, including UNISON's app, the Organising Space and the online skills bank, to engage new members and encourage existing members to become active;
- 3) Publicise and promote examples of good practice in equality and community organising which have led to recruitment and engagement;
- 4) Encourage branches, regions and service groups to involve self-organised and young members groups and migrant workers networks in developing and implementing recruitment and organising strategies.

National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee

13. Branch Self Organised Groups

Conference celebrates the fact the since the birth of UNISON self-organisation has had an essential and continuing role in the development and participation of Black and minority ethnic members, Women, Disabled people and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender members. However, many of UNISON branches do not have their own local Self Organised Group (SOGs).

One of the barriers to setting up a group can be that only one or two members from a particular branch may be interested in participating. In these circumstances it can be beneficial for a number of branches in geographic area to come together and support a "cluster" SOG open to any relevant member. Conference applauds the work of Black activists in both Suffolk and Norfolk who have established county wide SOGs open to any member regardless of service group.

Some branch SOG Officers are not given enough support and development and struggle with setting up and maintaining a branch group. Conference therefore

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applauds the Eastern Region for running a residential training weekend for SOG Officers.

UNISON's membership forms do not ask members to self-identify in these areas with the exception of ethnicity. However, this means that branches cannot send targeted information about self-organisation for any particular SOG and thus struggle to maintain SOGs or even set them up.

Conference therefore instructs the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Produce guidance to all branch secretaries and regional SOG Committees on alternative ways to support branch self organisation;
- 2) Promote SOG Officer training in each region;
- 3) Consider how to encourage more members to self-identify in all areas;
- 4) Instruct each National SOG Committee in partnership with Regional SOG Committees to report annually on branch self-organisation within each region and report progress to branches.

Cambridgeshire Constabulary

14. Branch Self Organised Groups

Conference celebrates the fact the since the birth of UNISON self-organisation has had an essential role in the development and participation of Black members, women, Disabled people and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender members. However, the majority of UNISON branches do not have their own local Self Organised Groups.

One of the barriers to setting up a group can be that only one or two members from a particular branch may be interested in participating. In these circumstances it can be beneficial for a number of branches in geographic area to come together and support a "cluster" SOG open to any relevant member. Conference applauds the work of Black activists in both Suffolk and Norfolk who have established county wide SOGs open to any member regardless of service group.

Some branch SOG Officers are not given enough support and development and struggle with setting up and maintaining a branch group. Conference therefore applauds the Eastern Region for running a residential training weekend for SOG Officers.

UNISON's membership database does not have information on a large number of its members. This means that branches don't know who are their Black members and cannot send them targeted information about self organisation.

Conference therefore instructs the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Send every branch secretary and regional SOG Committee guidance on alternative ways to support branch self organisation;
- 2) Promote SOG Officer training in each region;

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- 3) Consider how branches can be supported to encourage more members' to declare their ethnicity;
- 4) Instruct each National SOG Committee to report annually on branch self-organisation within each region.

Bedfordshire Police

Lay Structures

15. Representation of Members within Further Education

Conference notes that UNISON members working in Further Education currently belong to the union's Local Government Service Group and questions whether this is really the most effective structure for representing the interests of members in Further Education.

The majority of the Further Education membership belongs to large Local Government branches, with many Further Education Colleges having only one, two reps or none at all. Conference believes that while many Local Government branches provide excellent representation to members in Further Education, it is sometimes the case that members working in Further Education feel marginalised within large Local Government branches centred on the local council, and that their issues and concerns are not always given the same priority as those of members working in Local Government services.

Conference recognises the increasing involvement of Further Education Colleges in delivering Higher Education courses which suggests that members working in Further Education have more in common with their education colleagues in Higher Education than they do with workers in Local Government.

Conference believes that the interests of UNISON members working in Further Education would be better served by their inclusion within a joint service group covering post-16 education including Further Education colleges, Sixth Form colleges and Universities.

Conference notes the reserved powers of the National Executive Council under rules D 3.1.2 and D 3.1.3 to determine which sections of the membership of the union fall within the scope of each Service Group of the Union, to authorise the creation of additional Service Groups or to vary the allocation of members to Service Groups, but shall do so only after consultation with the Service Group or Groups concerned.

To this end Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council, using its powers under rules D 3.1.2 and D 3.1.3 to:

- 1) Launch a consultation with all relevant sections of the union, including the Local Government Service Group, Higher Education Service Group, National Further Education and Sixth Form Colleges Committee, Regional Further Education and Sixth Form Colleges Forums, and standalone or combined Further Education College branches, over how support staff in Further Education can be most effectively recruited to, represented by and organised by UNISON within the existing service group structure of the union and/or whether any changes to the

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composition, boundaries and name of any of the existing service groups is necessary in order to best achieve these aims;

- 2) Arrange a conference open to all members working in post-16 education to feed into the consultation process and to discuss issues of joint concern and interest to staff working in post-16 education;
- 3) Take forward as appropriate any recommendations arising from this consultation.

City and Islington College

Negotiating and Bargaining

Bargaining

16. Trade Union Facilities

Conference notes that in a fair and democratic society workers have a fundamental right to form or join an independent trade union. These rights are enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Labour Organisation convention, and the European Convention on Human Rights.

Conference notes that facility time for trade union representatives has been under pressure for some time, even before the current attack by this government. A combination of ideological opposition to trade unions in some areas, and massive cuts in public sector funding, have led employers to slash facility time, and to clamp down on the use of facility time in outsourced areas.

As the amount of facility time is reduced so the pressure on existing activists and branches increases, particularly at a time when the government's austerity budget is putting even greater pressure on activists through yet more restructuring, redundancy and outsourcing. Conference congratulates those branches which have fought back against cuts in facility time, and welcomes the campaigning, research and political work carried out at all levels of the union on this issue.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to campaign vigorously for facility time to be made available to elected representatives so that they can perform their duties;
- 2) Promote the benefits of facility time for workplace employment relations in the press and media and on social media;
- 3) Call on Service Groups to work with employers and employer umbrella groups at UK and national levels to promote the benefits of facility time, utilising model agreements where appropriate;
- 4) Ensure that best practice is promoted amongst UNISON branches in terms of agreements with employers for facility time.

Recognising that there is a clear and immediate problem as a result of the continuing assault on facility time Conference calls on the National Executive Council to urgently:

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- a) Promote the development of new activists, so that the burden on existing activists can be more evenly shared by:
 - i) Encouraging branches through the Joint Branch Assessment (JBA) to set realistic targets for the development of new activists;
 - ii) Encouraging branches to promote the use the 'Team UNISON' facility in 'My UNISON' by members to volunteer their time and talents for UNISON;
 - iii) Encouraging branches to have in place a mentoring system to support and develop new activists;
 - iv) Further developing and extending the flexible training options available, including distance and e-learning short courses, so that more new activists can access steward training more easily.
- b) Encourage branches to pool resources where appropriate in order to relieve the pressure on individual activists, either through sharing work or resources as in the case of joint branch shop front/resource centre or the employment or the joint employment of staff. And to support such initiatives by ensuring that there are in place appropriate processes to enable branches working with their region can access written guidelines about how this can best be done;
- c) Provide advice and support to branches on best practice in terms of both facility time agreements, including model agreements, and the allocation of facility time, in those cases where the employer agrees to provide it;
- d) Investigate the usefulness and costs of providing a helpline for activists who feel that they want to talk to someone about the pressure of their work on behalf of members;
- e) Keep under review the provision and use of facility time with a view to showing the benefits as part of the campaign by UNISON for the provision of facility time. Looking not only at the pressure on individual activists but also the consequences for employment relations in the workplace including the negative effects on consultation and representation;
- f) Work with Labour Link to campaign to defend facility time, briefing individual elected politicians at all levels, developing model motions for councils and pushing for debates in the UK parliament and the parliaments and assemblies of the devolved nations;
- g) Report progress in respect of facility time to next year's National Delegate Conference.

National Executive Council

17. New ways of working: Agile, lean or mean?

Government cuts mean employers are looking at new ways of working to save money. Lean or Agile Working, developed by Toyota for use in manufacturing industries, is increasingly being introduced in the public sector. We understand these

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methods can bring financial savings and improve working conditions but only if implemented properly.

Conference is concerned that some employers introduce measures to cut costs, reduce waste and increase productivity but ignore key principles like effective communication and improved career development that improve staff satisfaction. They don't appear to understand that delivering public services is not the same as a production line. A 'one size fits all' approach will not work and the impact, particularly for Disabled Members, can be devastating.

Hot desking reduces accommodation costs but a recent study found competition for space makes employees feel undervalued, reduces morale and effects productivity. Increased risk of infection and eye strain from shared workstations, muscular problems and fatigue from unsuitable chair, loss of control, increased stress and anxiety and no safe, accessible place to keep medication all impact on disabled members who report hot desking actively aggravates their condition.

Open plan offices accommodate more people but an average auditory band width of only 1.6 people means hearing, talking and concentrating is difficult. Increased isolation and stress means productivity for people with hearing problems is reduced by up to 66% and people with mental health issues report the constant noise has a detrimental impact on their health.

Homeworking reduces overheads and is increasingly popular with employers but many don't carry out risk assessments or provide appropriate equipment. While homeworking can be good but for some people it means a lack of support and reduced social interaction leading to isolation, depression and increased stress. Difficulties accessing development and training opportunities or being overlooked for promotion affects all homeworkers but as some employers use homeworking to avoid making reasonable adjustments in the workplace the negative impact on disabled members is significantly higher.

Other aspects of lean working such as generic job descriptions, zero hours contracts, mobile working, commissioned outcomes and compressed hours all have a negative impact on disabled members. Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Develop guidance so branches and regions can support disabled members to request reasonable adjustments to new working practices;
- 2) Work with Service Groups and Self Organised Groups to identify examples of good practice for implementing new ways of working; and
- 3) Encourage employers adopting new ways of working to consider the impact on disabled people throughout the implementation process.

Newcastle City

18. Keep the Weekend Special

Conference is concerned by the increased attacks on unsocial hour's payments, particularly in the NHS, with the drive to seven day services. In other areas,

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particularly social care, these have been removed for a number of years. There have also been attacks on the weekend in other sectors of the economy of weeks, such as retail.

Conference believes that the weekend was a key achievement of the trade union movement. Time off at the weekend allows families and friends to be off together, spending quality time together. Many social activities such as sporting event, music performances as well as family events are arranged at weekends, with time off at the weekend also supporting religious observance.

Childcare can be a significant issue for staff working weekends due to schools being closed and higher costs for private provision. Furthermore public transport timetables are different on weekends leading to staff not being able to get to work other than by taxi or much longer journeys.

Conference recognises that many services need to be delivered across the weekend, and that there are other services where weekend working is appropriate to improve access to the service for the public and efficient use of resources. However, wherever this is the case rotas should be designed in consultation with staff to ensure they minimise disruption and staff are compensated as appropriate.

Conference applauds the recent strikes by Junior Doctors, part of which was defending Saturdays being treated as unsocial. Conference welcomes the decision by the Health Service Group to ballot for industrial action in defence of unsocial hours enhancements where necessary.

Conference believes that in addition to an industrial response in the sectors affected, there needs to be a broad based campaign in support of the weekend.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to work with service groups, TUC, Welsh TUC, Scottish TUC, Irish Congress of Trade Unions and other unions along with organisations promoting work life balance to campaign in support of keeping the weekend special.

University Hospital

Health and Safety

19. Health and Safety of Public Service Staff

Conference notes that when public services are under pressure from cuts and re-organisations that pressures increase on both staff and service users. Add those things to the Westminster government's austerity agenda and we have a recipe for disaster.

Employee's health, safety and well being in the workplace are bearing the brunt of a nation ready to explode.

Stress, bullying, harassment and violence are all reaching record levels and staff are struggling to cope.

Employers are failing in their duties or turning a blind eye whilst their staff suffer or worse still they offer "resilience" programmes to help staff cope better – whilst

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neglecting to manage the very things that are causing them stress at work. Staff cuts, casualisation, zero hour contracts, being expected to do more with less are all causes of stress to our members at work.

Conference believes that employers should – no – employers must – reduce the risks to health or harm for all employees. Telling them to toughen up is not good management.

Conference further believes that:

- 1) Managing excessive workloads is good management;
- 2) Tackling stress at work is good management;
- 3) Dealing with bullies in the workplace is good management.

But sometimes employers need some guidance on how to be good managers of health, safety and well being in the workplace. And no-one is better placed than UNISON to give some helpful direction.

With a network of over 6000 Safety Reps working tirelessly to support our members – we have the knowledge and expertise to advise of what good management practice is in the workplace around health and safety.

Conference believes our safety reps need to know how to confidently use the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act and other associated regulations, how to serve union improvement notices on poor practise and how to access and complain to the Health and Safety Executive should employers continually flout legislation.

With this in mind, Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Formulate a Health and Safety Charter highlighting good employer health and safety, especially around the management of stress, bullying, harassment, violence and promoting positive well being in the workplace;
- b) Lobby government to endorse the charter of good practice;
- c) Encourage branches to promote the charter;
- d) Expand the numbers of our health and safety reps;
- e) Build confidence in our safety reps to use the existing legislation and regulations to hold employers to account for their plans and actions;
- f) Put health and safety compliance in UNISON guidance on public procurement;
- g) Encourage employers (especially national businesses and bodies) to adopt the charter.

National Executive Council

20. Promoting Employee Wellbeing and the Role of Health and Safety Reps

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Conference welcomes interest amongst employers in the use of measures to improve employee wellbeing.

Conference notes that NHS England chief executive Simon Stevens has announced a major drive to improve the health and wellbeing of NHS staff and that the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Plan includes a commitment to establish a workplace wellbeing charter.

Conference notes that the rationale for employers undertaking such initiatives is often presented as being one of enlightened self-interest. For example, to cut the estimated £12billion annual cost of sickness absence in the UK.

Conference welcomes the TUC's publication of "Work and wellbeing – a trade union resource", and agrees with its emphasis on employers addressing the issue of illness and injury caused by work. Work-related sickness absence accounts for around one-sixth of all sickness absence, and is where employer action can have most impact. In addressing workplace causes of sickness absence, Conference believes that trained health and safety reps have a key role to play.

Conference is concerned that the provisions of the Trade Union Bill are likely to put pressure on public sector employers to reduce the time allocated to reps, including health and safety reps, for trade union duties.

Conference is further concerned that there is a tendency for employers to focus their efforts on causes of ill health that are less directly linked to work. Conference believes that employer attempts to change employee behaviour and lifestyle should always involve choice rather than compulsion and must always avoid stigmatising groups of workers.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to promote the importance of health and safety as an organising issue;
- 2) Encourage the recruitment and timely training of health and safety reps;
- 3) Closely monitor the impact of the Trade Union Bill on the granting of time off for health and safety reps and:
 - a) Publicly highlight and campaign against cuts to facility time for health and safety;
 - b) Provide appropriate support to branches to cope with any such cuts in health and safety capacity;
- 4) Encourage branches to engage with employers about employee wellbeing with a focus on ill health and injury caused by work.

Stockport

21. Administration of medications and medical procedures

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Conference raises major concerns over the continued expectation for local government employees to administer medications or carry out increasingly invasive medical procedures by our members supporting young, disabled and older people.

Our current advice is that administration of medications or medical procedures should only be supported by our members if they choose to do so voluntarily with the correct accredited training and healthcare support. UNISON have been monitoring the situation over the past number of years and concluded that this is no longer a viable option. Our members are finding it increasingly difficult to carry out care across education and the care sector without some form of medication or medical procedure being required of them.

Local government are facing huge cuts to services despite providing significant care within communities, the NHS quite rightly will maintain its budget but that money can only be used for health services not local government.

Social care should not be healthcare on the cheap, healthcare is a valued service but using unqualified 'volunteers' is putting our members and vulnerable people at risk. It is time to demand that with 'integrated shared services' any administration of medications and medical procedures are carried out by fully trained, appropriately paid, identified experienced providers supported by our healthcare professionals across all settings.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign to put a stop to our members being put at risk by voluntary administration of medications and medical procedures within local government settings;
- 2) Negotiate with our local government and healthcare colleagues to access appropriate provision for administration of medications and medical procedures across all required settings.

Aberdeenshire

Pay

22. Living Standards Pay Justice and the Living Wage

Conference notes research by the House of Commons Library in January 2016, which showed that 2010-2020 will be the worst decade for pay growth in almost a century and the third worst since the 1860s.

Conference considers this a damning indictment of successive Coalition and Conservative government policies on public sector pay, social security and the wider economy that have led to an unprecedented reduction in living standards for people across the UK.

Conference is dismayed that the continuation of austerity throughout the current Parliament is to be accompanied by an ongoing public sector pay cap of 1% yearly increases.

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Conference notes the attempt by the chancellor George Osborne to hijack the living wage idea with his plans for the “National Living Wage”.

Conference recognises that this may lead to some welcome increases in pay for some UNISON members, but at the same time emphasises that this is in reality merely a raising of the National Minimum Wage level, and even then only for the over-25s.

Conference resolves to continue campaigning for the real living wage to be applied across the UK.

Conference congratulates UNISON and others on the resolute campaigning against government changes to tax credits, which led to a climbdown by Osborne at the comprehensive spending review in December 2015.

However, Conference recognises that this represents merely a delaying of the pain that working families will experience, with the cuts to Universal Credit set to come in from April 2016.

Conference believes it is now time to reverse the constant squeeze on members’ pay and living standards.

Conference welcomes the National Executive Council review of pay campaigning agreed in December 2015 and notes as a result:

- 1) The union has begun a process of reviewing anniversary dates with a view to alignment (thus facilitating cross union action);
- 2) The union has taken steps towards a review of industrial action tactics in the light of the Trade Union Bill, and is reviewing how different national contexts affect it;
- 3) The relevance of a union wide campaign, building on the “Worth It” initiative, covering public, private and community and voluntary sectors based on the themes of pay justice and total pay, and incorporating campaigns on the living wage, equal pay, workplace issues such as zero hours and staff shortages.

Conference believes that pay campaigning must be integral to the whole union at national, regional and branch level.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- a) Continue to build a campaign for an end to the punitive public sector pay cap, and where necessary in line with industrial action guidelines build towards industrial action;
- b) To continue to build pay campaigns across UNISON's bargaining structures where possible;
- c) Continue to highlight falling living standards and the impact that government welfare policy is having on these;
- d) Campaign for a proper living wage across the UK;

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- e) Ensure the campaign is linked in to UNISON's wider anti-austerity campaigning for public services in a way understandable by members;
- f) Produce activist and steward training to build member confidence when talking about pay issues in the workplace;
- g) Where possible to link and coordinate such campaigns across sectors and unions in line with TUC policy.

National Executive Council

23. When is a living wage not a living wage?

Conference notes the rates set for the Living Wage by the independent Living Wage Foundation as a national rate of £8.25 per hour, and £9.40 per hour for those working in London, and that these rates do not discriminate on the grounds of age.

Conference also notes that amongst the benefits of paying the Living Wage are:

- 1) Workers able to provide for themselves and any dependents;
- 2) Improved quality of work and a reduction in absenteeism;
- 3) Better recruitment and retention of employees.

Conference further notes the 'National Living Wage' announced by George Osborne was introduced in April 2016, at a rate of £7.20 per hour, but only for those aged 26 years of age and over. Conference accepts this marks some progress for some workers, but it is not an independently-calculated Living Wage, it discriminates on grounds of age, and no additional funding is being provided to ensure public services can pay the increase without impacting on services.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Maintain a clear position that the Tories 'National Living Wage' is not a Living Wage, but an age-discriminatory 4th tier of the National Minimum Wage;
- b) Continue to press ahead with campaigning to win Living Wage agreements in its bargaining;
- c) Reiterate the aim of achieving a National Minimum Wage of £10 per hour.

National Young Members' Forum

24. In-Work Poverty

More people are living on low incomes than during the recession of 2008. Families face an increased risk of falling below the poverty line. Six in ten households with at least one person in work still struggle to make ends meet. Cuts to in-work benefits have contributed to an increase in the risk of having too little income to meet the minimum income standard (MIS) based on what the public say is needed for an acceptable standard of living. 11.6 million people have been identified as living below MIS, 28% of workers.

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Fairly paid work is the best way to economic security and a better standard of living. Despite working full time hours more families than ever are still falling short of what they need to live economically secure lives.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Lobby the government to ensure that a real Living wage as opposed to the 'National Living Wage' is implemented for all workers and oppose cuts to in-work benefits for working families;
- 2) Work with Labour link to ensure a real Living Wage would be implemented under a future Labour government;
- 3) Encourage branches to lobby their local MPs and Councils to educate them about a real Living wage as opposed to the 'National Living Wage.'

Somerset County

25. Funding for National Minimum Wage

On 8 July 2015, George Osborne stood up in Parliament at 12:30pm to deliver his Summer Budget speech. One of the announcements in that speech was: "I am today introducing a new National Living Wage. We've set it to reach £9 an hour by 2020. The new National Living Wage will be compulsory. Working people aged 25 and over will receive it starting next April, at the rate of £7.20".

When tenders for contracts were submitted to local authorities and other funders, this increase never figured in any equation that was submitted by service providers and charities. From their perspective this is now a burden that they will have to shoulder and in some cases funding for the increase will come out of the organisations reserves, leaving them and the vulnerable individuals supported by the third sector even more vulnerable. In other organisations they are now targeting terms and conditions to reduce costs. There have been no funding increases from Westminster, devolved governments or local authorities to ease the burden of their financial commitment to pay the increase.

Social care is the one service that is feeling the strain through budget cuts that not only affects the service users but the staff that provide the care and support, terms and conditions are abysmal in many organisations, poor pay scales and no hope of improvement in the future. If additional funding is not available then they will only deteriorate further.

This announcement was received by those that would benefit with great thanks, raising the hourly rate of those that would qualify by 50p an hour, this for our members over 25 on minimum wage was brilliant, but at what cost? The young members of UNISON below the 25 age threshold will still be on minimum wage. Tax credits are also at risk as the increase in hourly rate will affect the threshold at which the Tax credits are payable, for members the increase could mean that the benefits of Tax credits will be reduced, so a no win situation.

The Third Sector is being hit the hardest with these changes, it has been stated by the Chancellor that local authorities in England can increase council tax by 2% to

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cover this increase, but we need to be assured that this additional funding will be cascaded to the Not for Profit Organisations and charities to offset the cost of implementing this mandatory wage increase otherwise the current poor terms and conditions will be further trimmed to the bone. Is it not a fair society that rewards those workers that are supporting the most vulnerable in society with equitable pay rates and decent terms and conditions?

The big question is: As the wage increases and there are no terms and conditions of employment left to cut, what is the next step in the decline of social care and the future of members that will be unable to sustain their own survival in a profession that has a poor understanding of the requirements of members roles in support of the vulnerable individuals the length and breadth of the United Kingdom. This is not only an issue for those who work in the community and voluntary sectors. All UNISON members will be part of families and communities who rely on well trained, committed and appropriately rewarded staff who provide social care and support.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Develop a national campaign to support the Community and Voluntary Sector to raise awareness of the funding issues in relation to meeting the legislated increase to salaries made law by Westminster and the detrimental effects this is having on workers, families and communities;
- 2) Work with Labour Link to lobby MPs, devolved governments and local authorities to establish additional funding to assist organisations in the Third Sector with the mandatory increase in their wage bills for the benefit of all those who give and receive social care and support.

YMLAEN - FORWARD

Pensions

26. New Local Government Pensions Scheme Investment Regulations and Asset Pooling

Conference welcomes the national UNISON briefing of January 2016 - New Local Government Pensions Scheme Investment Regulations and Asset Pooling.

In particular, Conference believes that local government pension funds must be able to decide where to invest their money in the best interests of present and future pensioners, and should not have their investment decisions dictated by the government.

It must be the combined funds - and not government ministers - that decide where to invest scheme member's future incomes, in ways that are in their best interests, and not that of the government.

Conference also believes union nominated representatives should be appointed to the new pool governance structures so that any investment works for the millions of teaching assistants, refuse workers, care workers and all other local government workers and scheme members whose pensions are held by the scheme.

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Conference calls on the National Executive Council and Pensions Service Group Liaison Committee to work towards achieving these aims.

Wolverhampton General

27. Pension Funds: Divestment from fossil fuel extraction

This, the National Delegates Conference of UNISON, acknowledges the importance of well sourced Pension Schemes that provide reasonable returns so that members can live with dignity after retirement. We also acknowledge the value of legislative changes that allow trade union representation on Pension Boards as a positive step.

Conference fully supports the TUC campaign to increase employment through a substantial increase in 'climate jobs' but is concerned about the impact of CO2 emissions and the resulting accelerated global warming caused by burning fossil fuels when adequate clean alternatives are available.

Local Government Pension Funds in the UK have assets worth over £230 billion. £14 billion of this – over 6% – is invested into fossil fuel corporations through their 101 pension's funds, responsible for 4.6 million employees.

We now know that 80% of the world's oil, coal and gas reserves need to stay in the ground to prevent catastrophic climate change.

This is a moral argument.

Pensions are for our and our families' future. But that future is threatened by fossil fuel extraction. Without bold action to keep 80% of fossil fuels in the ground, a changing climate will have devastating consequences for people, societies and ecosystems around the world. By investing £14 billion in fossil fuel extraction, our local governments are providing resources that accelerate climate change. As public bodies, local governments have a responsibility to work for the public good; they shouldn't be financially and politically supporting the most destructive industry on the planet. Fossil fuel investments undermine existing local authority climate change mitigation; adaptation strategies and commitments.

It is also a financial argument.

When governments finally take climate change seriously and legislate to leave fossil fuels in the ground, shares in oil, gas and coal will become worthless. Funds which don't invest in fossil fuels often perform as well or better than fossil-fuel heavy funds, so divestment does not mean that existing pension funds lose out. Making 4.6 million public sector pensions dependent on long term profits from an industry threatening a safe planetary future is not a sensible investment strategy. When local governments allow pensions to be exposed to fossil fuels, they're relying on stranded assets for the safe retirement of their workers.

As continued investments in fossil fuels pose material financial risks to portfolios, funds have fiduciary duties to consider the benefits of decarbonising as part of their investment strategies. Furthermore, Trustees may consider non-financial factors if members share the concern and there is no risk of significant financial detriment to the fund – which is increasingly the case for divestment.

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And it is a public benefit argument.

£14 billion could build over 200,000 homes or generate more electricity than Scotland uses. By investing this capital into renewable energy, public transport and social housing, local government could create jobs and boost local economies, while protecting pensions in the long term.

Investing into fossil fuel multinationals does not support local jobs, economies or infrastructure. Other than the return on capital, there are no real social or economic benefits for local government – or for residents whose council tax goes into the Pension fund. Further, every £1 spent on construction generates a further £2.09 on economic activity, higher than the return to most other sectors including advanced manufacturing and finance.

By divesting the £14 billion currently invested in fossil fuels, local councils can take an important step forwards in challenging climate change. Reinvesting this money into renewables, housing and public transport is a feasible and sensible strategy for providing a long term return and building safe pensions for public sector workers.

As well as providing safer long term returns for pensions, all of these would create local jobs, improve the lives of local residents and boost local economies more than investing into multinational fossil fuel companies.

In some cases, this is already becoming a reality.

Lancashire County Council invested £12 million in Westmill Solar Coop, the UK's largest community owned solar farm. The solar farm has 1,648 members, who all bought shares in the project. Lancashire and the individual members will receive interest for 23 years, with a projected 11% annual return.

Local authorities could also invest in larger renewables energy projects, including offshore wind. The City of Copenhagen co-owns the Middelgrunden Offshore wind farm, together with a residents co-operative. The wind farm is 3.5 kilometres off the coast of Copenhagen, and provides 4% of the Danish capital's electricity.

With high up-front capital costs but long-term revenue streams, expanding urban public transport presents another sensible pension investment.

Enhancing bus, train and tram networks would create jobs, strengthen local economies and improve quality of life, while providing a long-term return on investment.

Reinvesting into Housing

Many councils already have property in their portfolios. But some, like Greater Manchester, are leading the way in investing into social housing. Islington Pension Fund is planning to put £150 million – 15% of its pension pot – into social housing – arguing that this offers more stable and guaranteed income and return than the private sector.

Calls to invest local government pension funds in new housing have come from both unions and Treasury reports. UNISON Scotland and the Scottish Federation of

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Housing Associations proposed using local government pension funds to build new social and affordable housing in Scotland.

A Treasury-commissioned study published in February 2015 argued that local authorities should invest £5 billion from their pension funds to create a “substantial increase in new homes nationally”.

The local government pension fund with the least exposure to oil, gas and coal is Lancashire County Pension Fund with 1.9%, whilst the LGPF with the highest exposure is GMPF who have the highest proportion of all the schemes.

- 1) Greater Manchester Pension Fund £1,304 million;
- 2) Strathclyde Pension Fund £752 million;
- 3) West Yorkshire Pension Fund £671 million;
- 4) Merseyside Pension Fund £355 million;
- 5) West Midlands Pension Fund £355 million.

By divesting fossil fuel holdings, local governments across the country will free up capital that can be invested more usefully, boost local economies, and provide public benefit while potentially generating a higher return than fossil fuels will over the next generation.

Pensions can be harnessed to drive the energy transition, create local jobs and support local innovation. Pensions can be more effectively put to work by creating and retaining value in local economies, while establishing new community ownership models. The long term nature of pension investments allows for the support of infrastructure essential in reducing inequality and meeting climate commitments, including social housing, public transport and renewable energy.

Local authorities in the UK led the way on divesting from apartheid in the 1980s. They did so again with the tobacco industry and today UNISON policy actively promotes divestment as part of its campaign against the occupation of Palestine.

Conference agrees to:

- a) Seek divestment from Fossil Fuel extraction for all LGPF where we have members;
- b) Seek alliances amongst other trade unions who share our objective and work co-operatively with them to achieve divestment;
- c) Engage with UNISON members with an aim of improving their knowledge base around climate threats created by Fossil Fuel extraction;
- d) Produce literature that will enable branches to engage with the employers where they are members of a LGPF.

North West Region Probation and CAF/CASS

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Campaigning

Privatisation

28. Public Service Campaigning - Stop Outsourcing and Protect Members

Conference believes that keeping existing public services in - house should be the default position for all public services on the grounds that public services offer better quality, accountability, efficiency and social value to citizens, workers and tax payers.

Any new forms of non public service delivery should not be considered until:

- 1) An in-house service improvement plan has been considered as a viable option at the options appraisal stage;
- 2) A 'public interest test' is met first before the decision to begin a commissioning process is made.

Conference notes however that public services are facing increasing attempts by the UK government to 'open up' public services to marketisation through privatisation, promoting public service mutual's and social enterprise and opening up market access to UK public services from private overseas corporations through new global Trade Agreements.

The UK public sector outsourcing market was estimated to be over £100bn by the end of 2015. Public services globally are now being outsourced at an unprecedented rate.

Conference remains opposed to privatisation, the growing use of Social Impact Bonds (SIBs) in alternative delivery models of payment by results and the 'spinning-out' of the public sector services to co-operatives, mutual's and social enterprises.

Conference believes that attempts to open up public service to the not -for- profit sector and 'social value led' organisations, in the current climate of unprecedented public service budget cuts is an ill - judged attempt to try and run services on the cheap. The new 'three year reservations' allowed in outsourcing for mutual's and social enterprises is not the answer to public service budget cuts and will likely be only an intermediate service delivery stop before the end destination of full privatisation.

This is delayed privatisation.

It is an in - direct route to privatisation and is not based on a sustainable strategy to support the not-for-profit in delivering quality public services without a race to the bottom. If the service is not sustainable in the public sector, Conference we would question how a co-op, mutual or social enterprise can be financially viable while retaining existing terms and conditions for the workforce.

Conference notes that on occasion it has been possible to take lawful industrial action in a transfer situation over the identity of the new employer.

Conference remains opposed to the 'spinning-out' of the public sector to co-operatives, mutuals and social enterprises for the following reasons:

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- a) The evidence is that with the lack of sustainable support for the not-for-profit sector, they will be forced to compete as private companies. Finding it difficult to compete charities and the voluntary community sector are being pushed out of public sector markets leading to private takeovers in the no-for-profit services;
- b) Once a service is transferred out of the local authority or other public body, it becomes a private company. It will have to compete as a private company. The council or public body has lost control;
- c) The unsustainability of public service mutuals means that workers can at any point be made redundant or transferred to another employer with loss of comparable pension rights and terms and conditions protection lost. All evidence shows that workers terms and conditions are eroded in nearly all outsourcing – there are very few examples of where they have been improved;

A recent survey of social enterprises in the UK (January 2016) demonstrated that only 25% recognised trade unions and only 60% paid the Living Wage.

- d) Little evidence exists that mutuals have delivered any better social or value added outcomes than a comparative public in-house provision or implemented true democratic control by staff, shareholders and stakeholders;
- e) There is little evidence yet that the new 'price-quality ratio' award criteria as set out in the new UK Public Contract Regulations 2015, has been used in the commissioning processes of not-for-profit outsourcing and spin offs instead of the old 'price/cost only' criteria to award contracts;
- f) To deliver quality public services in Local Authorities, NHS, Police and Justice, Education and other state agencies we need better funding. Non public alternative delivery models will not address funding shortfalls or prove an in-house service improvement plan cannot deliver savings or be efficient;
- g) These 'public service mutuals' are feeding the UK Government's agenda of deceiving the public into thinking this form of 'spinning out' is not privatisation, but adding social value to public services. It is delayed privatisation with the service once retendered, years later, likely to be privatised changing the future balance of public services away from public to private delivery;
- h) The cost of administering market processes and tenders takes funds from public services.

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

- i) Continue to campaign for existing public services to remain in - house as a default position for all public services and to promote the use of a 'public interest test' when outsourcing is proposed;
- ii) Continue to work with the We Own It campaign for a Public Service Users Bill of Rights which calls for:
 - A) Transparency: We have the right to information about decisions made in our name;

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- B) Accountability: We have the right to a real say over our public services;
- C) People before profit: We have the right to public services that put our needs above profit.
- iii) Continue to promote the new UNISON branch Guidance “How Your branch can stop outsourcing and protect members” (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) and equivalent Scottish procurement regulations on the new web procurement information hub, work with LAOS, regions and Service Groups in training and joint information sharing for branch activists;
- iv) Include negotiating and organising case study examples of UNISON outsourcing and procurement campaigns, good practice contracts with social outcomes adopted (UNISON's Ethical Care charter, apprenticeships, the Living Wage, abolished zero hours contracts etc) and other social and employment benefits to ensure better terms and conditions for members and provide organising and recruitment opportunities;
- v) Continue to work with public authorities to move outsourcing and privatisation contracts away from the ‘price or cost only’ award criteria, which has fuelled the race to the bottom on workforce pay and conditions and use the new ‘price-quality’ ratio criteria in public contract awards;
- vi) Continue to work with both the private sector and not for profit sector to promote social responsible procurement, the Living wage and trade union recognition;
- vii) Continue to promote alternative sustainable funding mechanisms, such as direct grants for the not-for profit sector to distinguish them from the private sector and enable the Voluntary and Community sector to continue to provide their niche valuable contribution to services in the public sector and maintain their social value ethos;
- viii) Continue to work with sister unions across the EU to press for Europe wide protection for public services.

National Executive Council

29. Keep It Local, Keep It Public

The political agenda of austerity measures has seen an increasing drive for public sector bodies to cut costs and make savings by way of rationalisation and economies of scale.

The theories which underpin centralisation are pursued as the best and only realistic solutions to reduce costs whilst delivering business benefits and maintaining service levels to our communities.

Private sector strategists are promoting decentralised institutions, but with work remaining in the private sector.

There is a body of academic theory, as evidenced by The Utrecht School of economics, that states similar approaches in the public sector offer equally viable and beneficial solutions.

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Conference calls on UNISON to:

- 1) Promote localisation agendas within public sector bodies;
- 2) Assist branches to fight against further privatisation by providing data on the effects of centralisation such as localised economic benefits.

Police Staff Scotland

30. Cancel PFI contracts

Conference notes:

- 1) That the NHS is spending more than £3,700 every minute to pay for privately financed hospitals;
- 2) PFI hospital schemes costs £billions, this cash is being paid to private companies as part of an annual repayment fee for building and operating new hospitals as well as redeveloping old ones, (£12.2 billion to build hospitals);
- 3) Trusts are locked into a contract for 25 to 30 years which far exceed the original costs of the project. To make this clear some NHS organisations could end up paying almost 12 times the initial sum over the terms of their contract, (between 29.1 billion and 41.4 billion in service charges).

Conference recognises that:

- a) If the NHS had financed through taking a mortgage at 5% over 30 years it would have cost £23.5 billion;
- b) If the government had borrowed the money at 2.5% over 30 years this would have cost £17.5 billion;
- c) Professor Allyson Pollock, an expert on PFI in the NHS, stated in a report in 2013 that the costs of borrowing in PFI deals “are consistently higher than public borrowing costs”;
- d) She said: “The high cost of PFI services and debt repayment will have a serious impact on NHS providing services by creating an affordability gap. There is a correlation between large PFI building projects and hospital deficits resulting reductions in services and staff.”;

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to support the demand that we cancel all PFI debts through renationalisation with no compensation to the companies involved, so that the sums saved can be returned and invested in the NHS. This would free up the billions putting this money back into the NHS where it belongs and to in patient care.

Bucks Healthcare and Community

Public Services

31. Public Service Workers under Pressure

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Conference notes that as a consequence of the unprecedented job cuts introduced by the Conservative government, the workload pressure being faced by many people working in public services is reaching a critical level. The effects on the well-being of our members, as working life becomes ever more stressful, and on the quality and sustainability of the services that they provide, will be catastrophic unless addressed as a matter of urgency.

Since the Conservatives were first elected to office in 2010, close to one million jobs have gone from the public services across the UK. As the Institute for Fiscal Studies have shown, this is higher than the public service job cuts implemented by Thatcher and Major in the 1980s and 90s. And although a proportion of job losses recorded by the Office for National Statistics can be accounted for by reclassification (e.g. Further Education colleges being moved to the private sector), the vast majority are direct cuts that leave ever fewer staff to try to pick up the pieces and deliver the quality services that our communities rely upon and deserve.

From social care to planning, probation to parks maintenance and from the NHS to libraries, the story is the same. A dedicated but depleted staff trying to do more with less for those that rely on the services that they provide. As one recent survey of 3,700 people working across public service jobs shows, almost all now report working beyond their contracted hours (on average respondents put in an extra seven hours a week) Close on one in five say they don't take any break during their working day, with less than a quarter (24%) enjoying a main break of at least 30 minutes.

To make matters worse, instead of showing sympathy and understanding to the public service workforce for the conditions under which they are expecting them to work, the government criticise and refuse to take account of the impact that their own policies have for the condition of services. As some commentators have pointed out in response to David Cameron's speech criticising social services in December 2015, the government's policies have a clear strategic direction of travel: cut-denigrate-privatise.

Unsurprisingly surveys show that morale across the public services is at an all time low and stress at an all time high. Most delegates to National Delegate Conference will have first-hand knowledge and experience of this growing crisis, and many will have had members coming to them suffering from stress and anxiety. Some 93% of respondents to the aforementioned survey say they are stressed at work either all, some, or a lot of the time.

Conference agrees that UNISON, as the leading public services union, has a responsibility to highlight the pressure being faced by those providing public services, to campaign for a change to current policies, and to show how this will be in the best interests of our members and for public service users. Conference notes that such a campaign will not be easy. The media, opinion formers and many politicians think that the public have accepted the need for cuts as a means of tackling the deficit and that the concerns of those working in public services is simply special pleading. However, as polls are beginning to show, the public are now growing concerned that the cuts are going too far and that services are being put at risk. This is a moment we must seize.

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Conference notes UNISON support for the British Medical Association and how they have so far successfully linked junior doctor working hours to patient safety in their on-going dispute in England with Secretary of State Jeremy Hunt. Also the successful Northern TUC Public Services Alliance which has been an effective campaigning body.

In this context Conference calls on the National Executive Council to develop an ambitious campaign that:

- 1) Speaks to and builds support among a public who are increasingly concerned about cuts to public services, particularly using new media;
- 2) Makes common cause with service users and patient and public service user groups through participation in both national and local community activities on a common cause;
- 3) Explains to the public the crisis facing public services, the difficulties and experiences our members face as a result of the crisis and ensures that blame for such deterioration is placed firmly with the Tory Government;
- 4) Develop credible policy alternatives that UNISON members and activists can advocate to politicians locally and at Westminster, Holyrood, Cardiff and Stormont.

National Executive Council

32. The threat to local democracy

Conference notes that the services provided by local government are essential for a civilised society and for the wellbeing of the community and the economy. These include services essential for the maintenance of health such as environmental and cleansing services; leisure services; social care and services critical to the creation of an educated and informed population and workforce through schools, youth and adult education and libraries.

Conference recognises that in addition to the cuts in services and jobs in local government that UNISON has opposed there has also been a sustained attack on local democracy and the powers of local government. The policies of ring fencing, centralisation of services, the removal of powers to control non-domestic rates and the imposition of council tax freezes mean that local councils have had less and less control over their budgets and less ability to determine and respond to local needs. The proposals for so-called devolution within England will also remove powers from the democratically elected and accountable local authorities.

This is nowhere more evident than in Scotland where the centralisation of water, careers, police and fire services, the removal of further education from council control, the imposition on councils of the number of teachers to be employed, the setting up of Health and Social Care Joint Boards, government control of non-domestic rates and the imposition, with the threat of huge penalties, of council tax freezes for 9 years, has hugely reduced the democratic powers of councils and removed powers from local control. Local government has become less local, less government and more administration of central government policies.

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Conference recognises that arguments about local democracy are not abstract and that they relate directly to the quality of services provided and the number of jobs created and sustained in local communities. Locally elected politicians can be held accountable for decisions they make by their constituents and solidarity can be built between the workers employed to deliver services, the service users they work with and the communities they serve.

Therefore Conference calls on the National Executive Council to include in its campaigns:

- 1) Promoting a greater understanding of the role of councils and the importance of local democratic accountability;
- 2) Building alliances with political parties, councillors and civic organisations to build broad-based support to return powers to local councils including tax raising powers;
- 3) Promoting measures to enhance citizen participation in local elections and local participatory structures.

South Lanarkshire

33. Local Government: A Public Sector Crisis

Conference notes the continued attack on local government funding, which is on course to reduce central funding to nil by 2020. The localism agenda and devolution are still being sold as the future of local government; however local authorities are unclear of future funding and continue to be subjected to caps on council tax rises.

Budget reductions in local government have already led to cuts in non-statutory services and this is set to continue. Many of these services offer opportunities to take a collaborative approach across the public sector on issues such as health and social care, crime prevention and health and safety.

Coupled with the inevitable outsourcing and fragmentation of the workforce, the demise of local government will have far reaching consequences for our members and society as a whole.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Formulate a grass roots campaign to educate members of the role local government plays in everyday society;
- 2) In partnership with Labour Link, lobby Labour led local authorities to oppose central government cuts;
- 3) Work with organisations such as the Local Government Association to analyse the impact of devolution to date and to stand up for local democracy and public services.

Broadland

34. Housing Crisis

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Conference notes that the UK faces an acute housing shortage, particularly in the South East of England, but also impacting in a significant way on many other parts of the country. This has led to rising housing costs which are unaffordable to many, leading to both housing and social problems:

- 1) House prices in the South East are the highest outside of London. Average homes cost £312,242, nearly 11 times the average salary;
- 2) Across the UK fewer affordable homes, such as social homes, are being built at a time when housing demand far outstrips supply; this is fuelling house prices which are set to rise by an average of 6% nationally;
- 3) In the South East there is a lack of genuinely affordable housing, only 21,890 homes were built in 2014/2015, around half the number of new homes needed to meet demand. Over 230,000 people are on the social housing waiting list and tens of thousands of households live in overcrowded accommodation. Thousands of families are housed in temporary accommodation;
- 4) It is estimated that there were 310,000 first-time buyers last year in England, down 0.5% on the previous year, and the average first-time buyers' deposit rose 13% to £32,929 in 2015. More people, particularly the young, are housed in the private rented sector, where rents have soared;
- 5) The supply shortage and housing demand have led to rising private rents. In 2015 rents increased by 4.9% to an average of £739 a month across the nation. The South East witnessed some of the biggest rent rises: the average cost of renting is now £864 a month in some parts of the region, this far outstrips local earnings. The alarming rise in rents shows how some private buy-to-let landlords are cashing in from rental properties at a time when social housing is in decline;
- 6) The selloff of council homes under the Right to Buy, the lack of new social homes being built to replace them; rising private rents; and cuts to welfare benefits have led to an increasing number of people on average incomes struggling to find a decent affordable home to live. This is resulting in increased rent arrears, overcrowding, financial hardship, social cleansing of families out of high value property areas into insecure private renting, and homelessness;
- 7) In the South East there are about 10,021 homeless households. In England thousands of new applications for homelessness were accepted last year than at any time since 2008;
- 8) Young people are most affected by the housing crisis; many of them have been pushed into private renting because of the shortage of housing, particularly social housing, the high costs of homeownership, housing benefit cuts and lack of employment opportunities. They are being robbed of a stable and secure home life due to the poor housing conditions of private accommodation and insecure tenancies.
- 9) The high cost of housing is contributing to public service staff shortages in key areas;

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The Tory government's response to the housing crisis in England is to introduce a controversial Bill in parliament which focuses on boosting homeownership at the expense of providing genuinely affordable homes that the majority of people need. Measures include the Starter Homes for sale policy, which will be funded by cutting the provision of low cost social housing, and the extension of the Right to Buy to housing association tenants, which will be paid for by forcing councils to sell off high value vacant council homes.

The reforms, together with plans to end lifetime tenancies and force some social housing tenants to pay market rents, attacks social housing. They will take funding away from social housing and will result in even fewer affordable rented homes for people on average incomes, deepening the housing crisis across all regions of the country.

Conference calls on the UK Government to:

- a) Invest in a public sector led house building programme, which will create homes, jobs, lower housing costs and improve the availability, accessibility and affordability of housing;
- b) Commit to the development of new social homes at below market rent which are affordable to people on average incomes;
- c) Reform welfare benefits, including an end to the bedroom tax and the lifting of welfare caps;
- d) Stop the Right to Buy across the whole of the UK in line with Scotland to safeguard social housing stock for current and future generations;
- e) Regulate the Private Rented Sector by introducing stronger rent controls and better regulation to drive up standards, strengthen tenants' rights and conditions by making private renting more accessible, affordable, decent and secure;
- f) Provide adequate financial support for the young and vulnerable to help them with housing costs and to combat homelessness and social problems.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to oppose the Tory Government's Housing Bill in its entirety and to reinstate UNISON's National Housing Forum as a key means of developing this campaign for a fair and socially progressive housing policy.

South East Region

35. Housing Crisis

Conference notes that the UK faces an acute housing shortage, particularly in the South East of England but also impacting in a significant way on many other parts of the country. This has led to rising housing costs which are unaffordable to many, leading to both housing and social problems:

- 1) House prices in the South East are the highest outside of London. Average homes cost £312,242, nearly 11 times the average salary;

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- 2) Across the UK fewer affordable homes, such as social homes, are being built at a time when housing demand far outstrips supply; this is fuelling house prices which are set to rise by an average of 6% nationally;
- 3) In the South East there is a lack of genuinely affordable housing, only 21,890 homes were built in 2014/2015, around half the number of new homes needed to meet demand. Over 230,000 people are on the social housing waiting list and tens of thousands of households live in overcrowded accommodation. Thousands of families are housed in temporary accommodation;
- 4) It is estimated that there were 310,000 first-time buyers last year in England, down 0.5% on the previous year, and the average first-time buyers' deposit rose 13% to £32,929 in 2015. More people, particularly the young, are housed in the private rented sector, where rents have soared;
- 5) The supply shortage and housing demand have led to rising private rents. In 2015 rents increased by 4.9% to an average of £739 a month across the nation. The South East witnessed some of the biggest rent rises: the average cost of renting is now £864 a month in some parts of the region, this far outstrips local earnings. The alarming rise in rents shows how some private buy-to-let landlords are cashing in from rental properties at a time when social housing is in decline;
- 6) The sell off of council homes under the Right to Buy, the lack of new social homes being built to replace them; rising private rents; and cuts to welfare benefits have led to an increasing number of people on average incomes struggling to find a decent affordable home to live. This is resulting in increased rent arrears, overcrowding, financial hardship, social cleansing of families out of high value property areas into insecure private renting, and homelessness;
- 7) In the South East there are about 10,021 homeless households. In England thousands of new applications for homelessness were accepted last year than at any time since 2008;
- 8) Young people are most affected by the housing crisis; many of them have been pushed into private renting because of the shortage of housing, particularly social housing, the high costs of home ownership, housing benefit cuts and lack of employment opportunities. They are being robbed of a stable and secure home life due to the poor housing conditions of private accommodation and insecure tenancies;
- 9) The high cost of housing is contributing to public service staff shortages in key areas.

The Tory government's response to the housing crisis in England is to introduce a controversial Bill in parliament which focuses on boosting home ownership at the expense of providing genuinely affordable homes that the majority of people need. Measures include the Starter Homes for sale policy, which will be funded by cutting the provision of low cost social housing, and the extension of the Right to Buy to housing association tenants, which will be paid for by forcing councils to sell off high value vacant council homes. The reforms, together with plans to end lifetime tenancies and force some social housing tenants to pay market rents, attacks social

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housing. They will take funding away from social housing and will result in even fewer affordable rented homes for people on average incomes, deepening the housing crisis across all regions of the country.

Conference calls on the UK government to:

- a) Invest in a public sector led house building programme, which will create homes, jobs, lower housing costs and improve the availability, accessibility and affordability of housing;
- b) Commit to the development of new social homes at below market rent which are affordable to people on average incomes;
- c) Reform welfare benefits, including an end to the bedroom tax and the lifting of welfare caps;
- d) Stop the Right to Buy across the whole of the UK in line with Scotland to safeguard social housing stock for current and future generations;
- e) Regulate the Private Rented Sector by introducing stronger rent controls and better regulation to drive up standards, strengthen tenants' rights and conditions by making private renting more accessible, affordable, decent and secure;
- f) Provide adequate financial support for the young and vulnerable to help them with housing costs and to combat homelessness and social problems.

Isle of Wight

36. Good Homes for All: Addressing the Housing Crisis

Conference believes that public policy should ensure that we all live in good quality and affordable homes. We note with concern the negative trends in the housing situation of people in England across the various forms of housing tenure:

- 1) Social housing has been plunged into financial crisis by the Chancellor's change to funding arrangements announced in July 2015. Housing Associations and local authorities with retained council housing stand to lose some £9.7 billion in rental income. At least 25,000 planned new-build social homes are now unlikely to be built with some commentators predicting the longer term consequences could be ten times that. Funding cuts will make it yet harder for local authorities to retain and add to their council house stock. Social landlords are cutting hundreds of jobs, losing the capacity for effective management and maintenance of a large-scale social housing stock;
- 2) Osborne is making us more reliant on the private rented sector. There are now more people in private rented accommodation than in social housing and it is private landlords who are the main recipients of housing benefit. The average private rent in England is now £816 per month, some 40% higher than the average social rent. The private rented sector is characterised by high rents, very variable quality and inadequate tenant rights;
- 3) Mortgage-holders are generally nervous of job loss or interest rate increases. Persistently low wage levels mean that few households feel secure in their ability

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to pay mortgages, while many people in full-time work have insufficient income or savings to buy a home.

Conference believes that the solution to unaffordable housing is higher wages and more homes, not cheaper credit or selling off social housing stock. We therefore oppose the government's help-to-buy or right-to-buy schemes.

Conference resolves to:

- a) Campaign for the following objectives in public policy around housing:
 - i) A large and well-funded stock of social housing that provides secure tenancies and good quality homes;
 - ii) Better regulation of the private rented sector;
 - iii) Better and more secure jobs to allow people to be able to afford to rent or buy a good home;
 - iv) More affordable homes to be built;
 - v) More accessible housing for people with disabilities.
- b) Work to promote these objectives with organisations that seek to promote social and council housing provision and tenants' rights.

Halton

37. Extending the Right to Buy Scheme to Housing Associations and 'Pay to Stay'

Conference notes:

- 1) Social housing is vital to the community, helping to secure a decent and secure home to live. The new government legislation on the Right to Buy will have a huge impact on our members who depend upon social housing as well as other low income families and the vulnerable;
- 2) Right to Buy will reduce the stock of social housing available as the subsidies will be funded by the sale of Local Authority's council house stock. There is a real risk that Council homes in London will be sold off by the government to pay for Right to Buy discount elsewhere in the country;
- 3) There are no guarantees that the replacement stock promised will be at social rent or that it will be in the same areas. This will further increase social cleansing in the wealthier parts of the country as social rent properties are sold and replaced with stock of different tenure;
- 4) That many who bought their council home in the past could not afford the mortgage and lost their homes;

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- 5) Right to Buy is abused by companies that made profits out of portfolios of ex-local authority housing, and by scams, legal and illegal, on the part of individuals keen to make a quick buck;
- 6) Mortgage-holders who bought council houses showed a far higher rate of repossession than other groups of home owners;
- 7) Repossession has had an impact on the increase of homelessness and the shortage of council properties, Shelter estimate that already 40,000 are homeless. Further sales of social housing will mean further shortages and have an impact on further homelessness;
- 8) That Right to Buy will not only mean more homelessness and longer waiting lists but also the loss of rental income could result in further attacks on our members pay, terms and conditions;
- 9) The government is also proposing that from April 2017 it will force all Councils and Housing Associations to charge market rents on all tenants who have a household income of over £40,000 in London and £30,000 elsewhere. This means if a household has two people in it earning £20,000 each (£15,000 out of London) then their rents could rise as much as 100% or more due to moving from a social rent to a market rent.

Conference agrees to support a campaign to:

- a) Join with Local Authorities and residents in campaigning vigorously against the legislation;
- b) Work with Labour Link to raise these issues and the need for more social housing to be on the top of the political agenda.

Greater London Region

38. Extending The Right To Buy Scheme To Housing Associations and “Pay To Stay”

Conference notes:

- 1) Social housing is vital to the community, helping to secure a decent and secure home to live. The new government legislation on the Right to Buy will have a huge impact on our members who depend upon social housing as well as other low income families and the vulnerable;
- 2) Will reduce the stock of social housing available as the subsidies will be funded by the sale of local authority's council house stock. There is a real risk that retained council homes will be sold off by the government to pay for Right to Buy discount elsewhere in the country;
- 3) Has no guarantee that the replacement stock promised will be at social rent or that it will be in the same areas. This will further increase social cleaning in the wealthier parts of the country as social rent properties are sold and replaced with stock of different tenure;

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- 4) That many who bought their council home in the past could not afford the mortgage and lost their homes. This is a particular risk in many parts of the UK due to extraordinarily high house prices;
- 5) Right to Buy is abused by companies that made profits out of portfolios of ex-local authority housing, and by scams, legal and illegal, on the part of individuals keen to make a quick buck;
- 6) Mortgage holders who bought council houses showed a far higher rate of repossession than other groups of home owners;
- 7) Repossession has had an impact on the increase of homelessness and the shortage of council properties, Shelter estimate that already 40,000 are homeless. Further sales of social housing will mean further shortage and have an impact on further homelessness;
- 8) That Right to Buy will not only mean more homelessness and longer waiting lists but also the loss of rental income could result in further attacks on our members pay, terms and conditions;
- 9) The government is planning that from April 2017 to force all councils and allow housing associations to charge market rents on all tenants who have a household income of over £40,000 in London (and £30,000 elsewhere);
- 10) This means if a household has two people in it working earning £20,000 (£15,000 out of London) each then their rents could rise as much as 100% or more (from a social rent to a market rent)

Conference agrees to support a campaign to:

- a) Join with local authorities and residents in campaigning vigorously against the legislation;
- b) Work with Labour Link to raise these issues and the need for more social housing to be on the top of the political agenda.

Housing Associations

39. The Housing Bill

Conference notes the proposed Housing and Planning Bill will have a devastating affect on existing and future social housing provision.

The Bill proposes to:

- 1) Compel councils to sell off 'high value' homes on the open market when they become empty;
- 2) End lifetime secure tenancies, meaning the break up of stable and mixed communities;
- 3) Introduce means testing for council tenants, with 'pay to stay' provisions;

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- 4) Effectively end direct government investment in new social rented housing;
- 5) Reduce permanent sites for gypsies and travellers

Furthermore the government's emergency budget in 2015 announced that council tenancy rents would be reduced by 1%. While reduction of housing costs is welcomed, the reduction of rental income to local authorities will in many cases have a major financial implication meaning that long-term plans for building council homes are reduced or cancelled, repair standards are cut, resulting in job losses.

Councils continue to be saddled with an extortionate level of debt imposed on housing revenue accounts in 2012 as part of the 'self-financing deal'. Despite their rental incomes being reduced, so far there is no compensation from government for these losses.

Many UNISON members will be directly affected by the government's proposals, whether they are tenants who will be forced to pay a market rate for rent and lose secure tenancies, or staff who will lose their jobs.

Conference believes that social housing should be a resource for all and calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Continue to campaign with Defend Council Housing against the provisions of the Housing Bill and to raise the profile of social housing as a resource for all;
- b) Survey our members to find out the affect of the proposals in order to campaign against the bill and its provision, and to support our members;
- c) Work with Labour Link and Labour councils to campaign for the 2012 housing settlement debt to be written off.

Cambridge City and South

40. Kill the Housing Bill

Conference notes:

- 1) The government's Housing and Planning Bill means higher rents, less security and less chance of a home you can afford. The Bill:
 - a) Makes councils sell off existing council homes;
 - b) Removes secure tenancies;
 - c) Introduces a "pay to stay" scheme for social housing tenants if two household members income is more than £30k (£40k in London);
 - d) Means increased rents and longer waiting lists;
 - e) Reduces travellers' rights;
 - f) Makes councils provide unaffordable "Starter Homes" instead of affordable housing for rent.

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- 2) The Kill the Housing Bill Campaign has already organised protests, lobbies and meetings aimed at bringing the Bill down, or making it unworkable.

Conference believes that the Housing and Planning Bill will not solve the housing crisis. It will make it worse. It will force people from their homes, families and communities, into insecure private renting. The housing crisis is damaging the quality of life of our members. Workers on low and moderate pay now find it almost impossible to afford a decent home close to where they work. An increasing number of our members are suffering high rents in sub-standard private renting or having to commute long distances because there's no alternative. Any improvements in pay and conditions won by unions are swallowed up by housing and travel costs. Housing is now a workplace issue and one that the whole labour movement needs to campaign around, starting with the Housing and Planning Bill.

Conference further believes that if the bill is passed councils and other housing providers, tenants and residents organisations and housing campaigners and Trade Unions will need to explore every means of continuing to challenge and resist the provisions contained within it.

Conference resolves:

- i) That as UNISON members are affected as tenants and housing workers UNISON must be in the forefront of continuing to challenge and resist the provisions of the Bill, whilst acting within UNISON's rules and procedures;
- ii) To continue to work with the Kill the Housing Bill Campaign, Defend Council Housing and other Housing campaigners opposing the provisions of the Bill.

Tower Hamlets

41. Social Care - A System in Danger of Collapse

Conference notes with concern the continuing pressures on council-funded social care services.

Conference believes that the ability of the care system to cope with increased demand due to demographic change has been undermined by bad policy choices at national level. Over the past twenty years, local authorities have lost much of their capacity to provide care directly for elderly and vulnerable people in both residential and domiciliary settings. Councils have become reliant on a multitude of private and voluntary sector providers to discharge their duty of care.

Conference believes that the private and voluntary sectors typically offer only low-wage, poor quality employment in social care. The contrast between private and council employers was evident in research by the University of Manchester, which found nearly 70% of private home care providers offered only zero hours contracts to staff, while 90% of local authority providers did not use zero hours contracts at all.

Conference notes that the introduction of George Osborne's so-called National 'Living' Wage of £7.20 from April 2016 is anticipated to increase the care sector's funding gap by a half by 2020. Conference believes that this illustrates the extent to

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which this is a low-wage sector, where the statutory minimum rate is currently the basis for wage-setting.

Conference applauds the work around the Ethical Care Charter and welcomes the decisions of councils to sign up to it.

Conference notes that without adequate funding for councils, the private and voluntary organisations that are relied on to provide care services may choose to exit the care sector. It has been predicted that 37,000 residential beds could be lost by 2020 due to increasing costs for employers and ever-tighter contracts being offered by cash-strapped councils.

Conference believes that the funding crisis faced by our councils is such that the ability to introduce a 2% hypothecated council tax rise for social care will not produce sufficient revenue.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to campaign:

- 1) For better funding for social care services, highlighting the importance of looking after vulnerable people and the inadequacy of funding arrangements for our councils;
- 2) For better pay and employment conditions for social care workers, and to promote greater trade union organisation across the sector;
- 3) For a more resilient social care system, through promoting the importance of councils having the capacity to directly meet a substantial proportion of domiciliary and residential care needs in-house;
- 4) To promote initiatives that support better care services and employment, such as the Ethical Care Charter.

Sefton

42. Crisis in Social Care

Conference believes there is a serious crisis in Social Care in the UK. This crisis has been developing for a few years and is reaching a critical point. We believe that this crisis is affecting all areas of social care, with children's social work frontline teams at the forefront.

Conference notes Composite A passed unanimously by Local Government Conference in June 2009, as amended by A.1 from Surrey County Branch. The amendment (now point 16 in the Composite) states clearly: [Conference calls upon the Service Group Executive...] To organise a one day conference on social care issues by the end of the year. This special conference never actually took place.

Conference feels strongly that the crisis in social care has now gone beyond a service-group specific remit and is an issue that affects everyone. Most of frontline social care, home care, day care etc. is now in the community or private sector. Mental health care is now more and more jointly delivered by 'integrated' health and social care teams.

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Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to organise a special one-day delegate conference on 'the Crisis in Social Care' as a major step towards developing a union-wide organising and publicity campaign in defence of publically-owned and democratically controlled, good quality social care and social work services.

Surrey County

43. Free and high quality funded childcare for all

Conference notes that lack of affordable childcare is the most persistent and disproportionate financial disadvantage that women workers face, particularly single parents, 90% of whom are women. The stagnant gender pay gap is in no small part due to the high costs of childcare in the UK, and the reliance of women workers on low paid, low status, part time work to meet childcare needs.

Conference is concerned by recent figures showing that the average cost of childcare has risen by 30% since 2010.

Conference notes that recent surveys indicate many families with preschool age children spend up to a third of their income on childcare costs.

Conference further notes that childcare professions especially in the private and voluntary sector is low paid, mostly employing part time women workers often with young children to support themselves.

A report by Childcare and Families Trust in 2015 showed that where the provider paid staff higher wages it was subsequently judged as giving high quality care by Ofsted.

The last Labour Government began a programme to expand the funded 15 hours offer for 3 and 4 year olds to disadvantaged 2 year olds and this has expanded to be now 40% of 2 year olds in England.

Childcare is increasingly a major issue for all political parties in the run up to the 2015 general election. The Labour Party has guaranteed wraparound 8am-6pm childcare for primary school pupils and 25 hours free childcare.

This government has begun an expansion funded free childcare provision for 3 and 4 years olds to 30 hours for some working families from September 2017.

The government has agreed to a review of the rate paid for 2, 3 and 4 year old funding.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign for universal free childcare for all children from the end of maternity / paternity leave until school age;
- 2) Campaign for childcare support which will benefit all parents, including those who work shifts and unsociable hours and for comprehensive policy measures geared towards the introduction of universal free childcare;

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- 3) Support the Gingerbread campaign for affordable childcare for single parents;
- 4) Work with other unions and staff for minimum rate of pay for childcare staff;
- 5) Campaign for decent terms and conditions for the staff providing childcare in schools and nurseries, including adequate training and safe child/carer ratios;
- 6) Urge Labour Link to make this a labour manifesto commitment;
- 7) Examine and raise awareness of the obstacles linked to childcare that women face in the labour market;
- 8) Continue to campaign to defend Sure Start nurseries.

Newcastle City

44. Open Libraries

Local government councils across the country are now considering the use of Open libraries where libraries are entirely unstaffed and visitors have to rely on self-service technology under surveillance from CCTV cameras to be able to access services. Staff would only be present at peak times.

Although recognising that councils are under pressure from lack of funding from central government UNISON is concerned about the use of Open libraries as we believe it contains risks for staff and for customers.

Library staff serve an important purpose, for many customers. They provide a wide range of advice and help as well as a means of security. They are experienced qualified and dedicated and enable accessibility for their customers.

In addition to this customers often use libraries as safe places to go. This includes customers with mental health issues who may have an issue with CCTV surveillance and young people. Some libraries have banned young people under the age of 16 from visiting Open libraries unaccompanied as staff are not present. This could significantly reduce access to education and enlightenment and a feeling of safety for these customers.

We are also concerned that the set up cost of Open libraries is substantial. For example following a freedom of information request at Edgware Library in the London borough of Barnet it cost £159K for installation and upkeep.

We would question the degree of savings that could be achieved by councils from this.

Library staff have been at the forefront of cuts in local government over the last 5 years and this valuable, essential service for the community is in serious danger of disappearing altogether. Ironically the concept of 'Open' Libraries could result in many libraries eventually closing down.

Conference call on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Oppose the establishment of Open libraries;

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- 2) Write to councils outlining UNISON's concerns about the establishment of Open libraries;
- 3) Encourage branches to oppose implementation of Open libraries by their employers.

Somerset County

45. Public Ownership of Energy utilities

Conference believes:

- 1) The changes within the Labour Party since the leadership election in 2015 indicate a welcome move towards UNISON's long-held view that the Energy Industry should be brought back into public ownership;
- 2) There is now a golden opportunity to provide support and information to help consolidate this view within the labour movement;
- 3) The research already commissioned by UNISON indicates the benefits which a publically owned Energy industry would bring in terms of:
 - a) Tackling the gross underinvestment in new generation capacity and infrastructure. In particular a nationally co-ordinated plan can drive the move to clean energy without the need to bribe private industry;
 - b) Introducing measures to tackle and eliminate the scandal of fuel poverty;
 - c) Eliminating the drive for profit which leads to excessive bonuses for senior executives, attacks on the employment contracts of ordinary employees and an ever increasing cost to the consumer.

Conference requests the National Executive Council:

- i) Seek to ensure that through the appropriate resources and channels we promote our policy of bringing the energy industry back into public ownership with the aim that the next Labour government has this as one of its key commitments;
- ii) Provide supporting information as necessary based on current and existing research in support of this aim.

Scottish Electricity

Campaigns

46. Trade Union Bill

Conference believes that the Trade Union Bill represents the biggest assault on working people's rights in living memory, and an unashamed and deliberate attack on public sector trade unions in particular. The Bill affects almost every aspect of trade unionism in England, Wales and Scotland. It shifts the balance of power in workplaces further to the advantage of employers and away from workers, whether they are in a union or not. It is fundamentally an attack on core trade union activity:

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facility time, check-off of subs, and the ability of unions to underpin collective bargaining with a credible right to strike.

It subjects unions to unprecedented levels of civil and criminal penalties, red tape, and monitoring by the Certification Officer, paid for by a levy on trade unions. It curtails unions' abilities to fund political activities and campaigns, within the Labour Party and wider civil alliances and groups. Conference notes that significant aspects of the Trade Union Bill's reach remains yet to come, with government reserving large areas for secondary legislation.

Conference pays tributes to the efforts of UNISON members and branches who campaigned tirelessly to defeat the bill, delay its implementation, dilute its provisions and build a stronger union at every level. Conference notes the consistent and dedicated turnout by UNISON members at all levels of the campaign to defeat the bill, including the Manchester demo at Tory Party Conference as well as the mass lobby of Parliament where members made up over 1,000 of the 2,500 workers who took part. Effective pressure and compelling arguments made to employers and politicians were also vital in ensuring employers across the country speaking up against the Bill, including the Welsh and Scottish governments, local authorities across England, Wales and Scotland, NHS Human Resources directors and Police and Crime Commissioners. Effective pressure on Conservative MPs also forced the government to make key concessions. Without the work of members and the leadership shown by UNISON activists and representatives, the Bill/Act would undoubtedly have proven to be even more destructive than it is.

Conference believes that it now falls upon UNISON to lead the fight to challenge, resist and out-organise a hostile government at Westminster determined to use its new powers to prevent trade unions from fighting for the interests of working people.

Conference asserts that the right to strike is fundamental to a free and democratic society. The UK already has one of the most regulated systems of industrial action in the world, with unions having to comply with highly complex legal requirements. Conference believes that UNISON will have to organise, campaign and challenge the proposed new restrictions with all the resources of the union in our workplaces, in our communities and in the courts.

When the right to strike is undermined, so are the incentives for employers to listen to their workers, resolve disputes and engage in constructive relationships with workplace representatives. Conference believes that as a result of the Trade Union Bill industrial action will become more common, more heated, and more prolonged. Allowing employers to use agency workers to break strikes will not only further undermine workers rights and safety in the workplace, it will also damage working class solidarity. Conference calls on UNISON to campaign and organise to resist any such attempts by the government and employers to divide the workforce.

Conference notes that allowing union members to use secure electronic voting or workplace ballot boxes for industrial action ballots would increase participation in union democracy, particularly amongst younger members. Conference believes this exposes the government's real agenda to disempower trade unions from fighting for decent pay and conditions for our members.

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Conference notes that attacks on the deduction of trade union subs from wages in the public sector is an unconcealed attack on public sector trade unions. Conference notes that not a single public sector employer has spoken up in support of removing check-off.

Conference asserts that the government's claims that check off is a burden on the public purse is similarly based on ideology rather than reality. Check-off is easy, efficient and very cheap to administer, and creates a transparent relationship between the employer and the union. Conference notes that UNISON further undermined this claim by showing that many branches already pay for the service and also by making an offer to ministers to pay for it in all remaining instances.

Similarly attacks are concealed by reserve powers to cap public sector facility time, in terms of hours and money spent as well as specific trade union activities. Facility time enables trade union representatives to carry out the vital role of representing individual union members, engaging in collective bargaining, working closely with employers to promote positive employment relations, keeping members informed, challenging discrimination, keeping workplaces safe and supporting workplace learning and education. UNISON must challenge any attempts by Ministers to cap facility time activities, but also to organise and campaign as never before to challenge discrimination and workplace injustice.

Conference notes that not content with attempting to weaken trade unions in the workplace, the government's attack on trade union political funds attempts to weaken the political and campaigning voice of trade unions at local and national level. Conference believes this to be a blatant attempt to suppress democratic criticism.

Conference further notes that new powers given to the Certification Office will enable higher levels of scrutiny and interference in the work of trade unions, launched by complaints from third parties. Conference believes that this will leave trade unions highly vulnerable to political interference and represents a further attempt by the government to weaken any opposition within society to its anti-worker agenda.

Conference fundamentally 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 therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to oppose the Trade Union Bill and any provisions that make it on the statute books;
- 2) Continue to defend facility time for stewards and 'check-off' facilities for members and develop new organisational strategies to ensure that recruitment and representation continue to be as effective as possible for all our members, and that the union can effectively continue to speak collectively for all our members;
- 3) Campaign to recruit more workplace stewards;

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- 4) Strengthen workplace level bargaining and campaigning to tackle discrimination and workplace injustice;
- 5) Review existing arrangements for political campaigning to ensure that UNISON's members' voices are heard at local, regional and national level;
- 6) Continue to work with the TUC, Scottish TUC, Welsh TUC and Irish Congress of Trade Unions on building a workers' movement for a just society;
- 7) Develop with the Institute of Employment Rights a positive charter of trade union and workers' rights for the next government at Westminster.

National Executive Council

47. Attacks on Democracy

Conference notes that the current government have shown a disregard for democracy and civil society, including:

- 1) The introduction of individual voter registration and a subsequent decline in voter registration;
- 2) Boundary changes based on these lower levels of registration that disproportionately hit regions where the Conservative Party has few MPs;
- 3) The Lobbying Bill, which restricts the ability of voluntary organisations – including trade unions – from campaigning against government policies at election time;
- 4) The Trade Union Bill, which places restrictions on the ability of unions to run and support political campaigns, collect subscriptions through check off and take industrial action unless arbitrary turnout levels are met;
- 5) The reduction in the level of “Short Money” to opposition parties, which will make it harder for them to scrutinise a government that has the full weight of the civil service behind them;
- 6) The gagging of charities through “gagging clauses” attached to government grants, restricting the ability of vital campaigning organisations to speak out on government policy.

Conference believes:

- a) That the government have a deliberate and co-ordinated strategy to restrict the voices of civil society in general and trade unions in particular;
- b) That this government's approach is a genuine and serious threat to democracy and scrutiny of their actions;
- c) That the government's aim for councils to raise more money through increasing business rates effectively discriminates against economically and socially-deprived areas, where unemployment is high and which are hard-pressed to attract new businesses;

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- d) That the development of the 'Northern Powerhouse' combined authorities, linked to the election of regional or sub-regional mayors, poses serious dangers to local democracy and the ability of local politicians, local communities and citizens to effectively scrutinize and control the activities of the new political elites and the new political elites that they will create.

Conference resolves:

- i) To campaign against all anti-democratic changes introduced by this government;
- ii) To ensure that local alliances are built with other unions, local ward and constituency labour parties and community and voluntary groups to campaign for decisions to be taken by local people. [A useful model for this could be the Public Service Alliances established in the Northern Region];
- iii) To promote and encourage UNISON members and activists to willingly support UNISON's policies on anti-austerity and local democracy by becoming more active in their communities, especially by standing for elected positions on local councils, hospital trust boards, etc;
- iv) For UNISON, in association with the TUC, the Workers' Educational Association and other relevant partners, to initiate a programme for the training of all its Stewards in understanding, from a socialist perspective, basic 'capitalist economics', in order to better prepare them to argue the anti-austerity cause. This programme to be eventually developed to be part of the basic training for all Stewards.

Northern Region

48. Women, the refugee crisis and trafficking

The government's Immigration Bill is a draconian piece of legislation designed to criminalise and stigmatise immigrants and undocumented people. It is part of a wider, ongoing government attempt to appear tough on immigration to an increasingly sceptical public.

While millions of people were moved after seeing the washed up body of three year old Aylan Kurdi, the forces of reaction still remain – as angry and hostile as ever. Violent elements are feeling emboldened. European countries are putting up their borders while the EU is establishing a border force to expedite deportations and force/bribe middle-eastern and north African countries to establish huge refugee camps in their own countries.

In the UK, government proposals as part of their crackdown on immigrant workers hold yet more perils for women seeking refuge, including the possibility of undocumented workers receiving a 12 month prison sentence – potentially separating women from their children and making them even more vulnerable to exploitative employers and worse.

Further, the withdrawal of financial support to 'failed' asylum seeker families will leave families and children homeless and with no means of support or ability to feed themselves or to earn money. This is despite the poor quality of Home Office

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decision making, highlighted by UNISON and others. In just six months between 2014/15 in over 50% of cases on which the Asylum Tribunal made a decision, the case was either allowed or remitted. That women and children will suffer if this Bill is passed is beyond doubt.

Meanwhile proposals to restrict access to NHS care for migrant workers are in the process of being implemented. This creates huge potential for discrimination against the UK's Black communities, and particularly women who may already struggle to access care because of cultural and language barriers.

Meanwhile the right wing media in the UK continue to focus on images of apparently healthy, fit young men fighting to board trains and smuggle themselves across the border from France – feeding the myth that migrants are primarily economic and seeing to take advantage of the UK welfare system

The prospect of a better life in Europe has driven many to make the treacherous journey across the Mediterranean. Thousands have died en route. Their misery, which makes them easy prey for people smugglers, is part of a global phenomenon that produces almost \$26bn a year.

Charging an average of around \$3,000 a person to reach Europe, the criminal gangs and the industry as a whole are flourishing.

Syria, Iraq, Ukraine, Afghanistan, and parts of sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia have all been affected. The British government's decision to bomb Syria will worsen the refugee crisis, increase the Islamophobia that many refugees face, and solve none of the problems that refugees encounter.

The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) reports that women and girls comprise about half of any refugee, internally displaced or stateless population. In shelters and camps these women are at greater risk of harm, due to traditional gender roles and women's position in society, including the risk of sexual and gender-based violence. Unaccompanied women and girls, women heads of households and pregnant, disabled or older women face particular threats.

Never ending uncertainty, lack of privacy, lack of educational resources, violence, abject hunger and poverty, and the threat of being trafficked into slavery are everyday realities faced by many.

Save the Children warn "Unaccompanied children are at the greatest risk from people traffickers, some are being forced into manual labour, domestic work, drug smuggling and prostitution."

It is estimated that there are up to 27 million people living in conditions of slavery, in forced labour or sexual exploitation around the globe today. The United Nations office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reports that global demand for prostitution and forced labour generates 32 billion dollars annually.

Trafficking women and children specifically for sexual exploitation is a high-profit and low risk endeavour for traffickers and the fastest growing criminal enterprise in the world. Despite the fact international law and the laws of 134 countries criminalise sex

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trafficking, human trafficking is the third largest international crime industry behind illegal drugs and arms trafficking. Nearly 100 000 people are trafficked across international borders every year of which more than 70% are women and half are children. Every 30 seconds, a child is trafficked, and the practice is often heightened in the wake of conflict or natural disaster.

The UK is a significant destination country for women, children and men to be trafficked. Women and girls make up 98% of victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation. A trafficker can earn between £26,000 and £52,000 per year from one victim. Furthermore, 11% of British business leaders polled through YouGov admitted that it was 'likely' modern slavery was playing a part in their supply chain. Britain has averaged one supply chain crisis per year in the last three years.

All sex trafficking violates basic human rights, including the rights to bodily integrity, equality, dignity, health, security, and freedom from violence and torture. Key international human rights treaties, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), consider sex trafficking a form of sex discrimination and a human rights violation.

Despite these many challenges and threats to their freedom, safety and security, Conference believes that, with the appropriate support, refugee women can improve their lives and the lives of their children, families and communities

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Strengthen our work advocating for evidence based, human rights centred policies around migration, which take account of the specific needs of women migrants and refugees;
- 2) Continue to challenge racist immigration policies and to support a wide range of anti-racist organisations at local and national level;
- 3) Lobby the UK government to use their influence to ensure that where refugee camps are in place, the safety and dignity of women is assured;
- 4) Consider how to support the International World Day against trafficking in human persons on 30 July;
- 5) Work with all appropriate UNISON committees to forge better links with international campaigns and solidarity initiatives and help raise awareness of the key issues in those countries identified as a priority for UNISON;
- 6) Encourage regions and branches to affiliate to those organisations that are a priority for UNISON;
- 7) Continue to work with those organisations that cross borders in their quest to eliminate violence against women.

National Women's Committee

49. Rape crisis in crisis

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Conference notes with growing concern the funding crisis within services that support women who have experienced rape and sexual violence. Despite the Tory manifesto commitment to central government funding of Rape Crisis centres, the impact of their austerity measures on the specialist services needed is stark.

In August 2015 it was reported that nationally none of the 46 Rape Crisis organisations in England and Wales had secure funding beyond March 2016 despite a 50% increase in the number of survivors receiving ongoing support. This had grown to 50,000 a year, with calls to helplines soaring to 164,000 - equating to an average of 3,000 calls a week.

With the Goddard enquiry looking into historical cases of childhood sexual abuse, it is likely that the increased demand for services will continue to escalate. Police records indicate that there has been a rise in reported child sexual abuse incidents from 66,120 in 2012 to a projected 113,291 cases in 2015, demonstrating a potential 71% increase over the last three years, with non recent cases rising by 165%.

In 2014 Ministry of Justice 'victims funding' was transferred to Police and Crime Commissioners. Since that decision there has been less funding to services which support women across the board. Rape Crisis England and Wales, in responding to the growing concern at lack of funding for specialist services, state that their member organisations are seeing "unprecedented levels of demand for their specialist services".

In October 2015, The Big Lottery Women and Girls Fund, which is able to sustain organisations for between 3 and five years, was oversubscribed by £238 million as against the £35 million distribution sum, demonstrating the high level of need for such service provision.

A recent Guardian article reported that there were 1,600 people on the waiting lists of 17 charities, with up to 10,000 survivors waiting for more than a year to be counselled across the 135 specialist services.

Historically there has been reluctance for women to report rape and sexual attacks and convictions are proportionately low. Conference believes that the consequence of failure to fund support services adequately would impact severely on those already reticent to come forward to ensure perpetrators are punished accordingly. It is therefore vital that the full range of support services for victims of rape and sexual abuse are properly funded.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Raise awareness of the funding crisis that Rape Crisis centres are facing;
- 2) Campaign for central government funding for Rape Crisis specialist services;
- 3) Encourage branches and regions to forge links with their local Rape Crisis service and support them in their fight for adequate and sustainable funding.

National Women's Committee

50. Fuel Poverty - The Cold Truth

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Conference notes that in 2010 the winter fuel allowance was reduced by 25% for people aged over 80 and by 33% for people under 80 years of age. Furthermore the reduced payment has been frozen since that time.

Conference further notes that:

- 1) To mark Fuel Poverty Awareness Day (27 February) the National Energy Action group published a report "A Manifesto for Warmth" which warned that at least 100,000 householders could die needlessly across the UK by 2030 due to an inability to heat their homes adequately. 75% of those affected will be pensioners which will include UNISON Retired Members;
- 2) The report also claims the NHS could be left with a £22 billion bill for treating cold related illnesses. Jenny Saunders Chief Executive of National Energy Action stated that Fuel Poverty Awareness Day was a wake up call on the need to end the cost and suffering caused by cold homes in the UK;
- 3) In the recent spending review, the Chancellor cut the number of homes benefiting from subsidised insulation and more efficient boilers from 400,000 to 200,000;
- 4) The Treasury will receive an estimated £28 billion in taxation on energy bills over the next decade.

Conference believes that there should be more support for the Energy Bill Revolution Campaign to eradicate fuel poverty.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Work with other trade unions and other appropriate bodies and groups including the National Pensioners' Convention to campaign for an increase in the winter fuel allowance;
- b) Support the Energy Bill Revolution Campaign;
- c) Raise awareness amongst UNISON members of the impact of fuel poverty.

National Retired Members Organisation

51. Support boycotts of unethical companies

Conference notes that local councils, public bodies and even some university student unions are to be banned by law from boycotting 'unethical' companies as part of a controversial crackdown that has been announced by the government.

Under the plan, publicly funded institutions will lose the freedom to refuse to buy goods and services from companies involved in, for example, the arms trade, fossil fuels or tobacco products. Any public body that continued to use boycotts would face severe penalties.

UNISON believes said that this amounts to a gross attack on democratic freedoms and that public bodies should have the right to make decisions free of central government political control that includes withdrawal of investments or procurement on ethical or human rights grounds

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Conference deplores this action by the government and calls for the right of public bodies to make their own decisions on investment and procurement based on ethical grounds.

Conference call on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Oppose the government decision to ban ethical boycotting decision of public bodies;
- 2) Work with the Labour Link to ensure that under a future Labour government public bodies would have the right to choose to boycott unethical companies they did not wish to support;
- 3) Encourage branches to raise the issue of ethical investment and procurement within their work places with their employers.

Somerset County

52. Ethical Procurement

In February 2016, the UK Government issued "Procurement Policy Note: Ensuring Compliance with wider international obligations when letting Public Contracts".

This policy was widely reported as a ban on the ability of local authorities, student bodies and other UK public sector institutions from boycotting procurement bids from unethical sources.

This policy was implemented without parliamentary debate or vote and indeed, challenges the ability of public sector bodies to make democratic decisions based on ethical principles.

Conference calls on UNISON for support and guidance to:

- 1) Challenge the application of the policy in members workplaces;
- 2) Further educate and enable activists to challenge on all matters regarding procurement.

Police Staff Scotland

53. Exploitation of the Domestic Workers, a Hidden Workforce in the UK

Conference believes that overseas domestic workers are some of the most vulnerable and exploited people in the UK.

Conference notes that a large number of migrant domestic workers who are brought into the UK by their employers sometimes perform similar work that home carers do; looking after the elderly, people with disabilities and young children in the private homes of their employers.

Some UK employers and wealthy people coming to the UK from abroad, employ migrant domestic workers to perform personal care and social care work because they can be easily exploited due to their visa situation which ties them to their

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employer. According to research conducted by Kalayaan, a UK NGO (Non-Governmental Organisation) which supports domestic workers:

- 1) The majority of domestic workers are 'on call' 24 hours a day, seven days a week;
- 2) 50% receive a salary of less than £50 per week;
- 3) 54% are subjected to psychological abuse and 23% experience physical or sexual abuse.

Conference believes that the removal of the Overseas Domestic Workers' Visa (ODWV) which had given them a modicum of protection to migrant workers, will tie these workers to their abusive employers, remove their rights as workers in the UK and condone slave like situations in the workplace. Many domestic workers provide public services that are hidden from public view as services are provided in the employers' private homes. This places them in very vulnerable situations. Many of these migrants come from poorer countries like the Philippines, Bangladesh, Nepal and a number of African countries.

Conference notes that as a union we support the international campaign for the rights of vulnerable migrant workers in Qatar, who are being abused by global companies. It is also important for UNISON to campaign and support the rights of migrant domestic workers against slave like working conditions in the UK. The UK's Modern Slavery Act 2015 is already failing to protect many of these workers because of their inability to seek protection using this law when the UK Government abolished the ODWV and replaced it with a six month visa with no employment rights in 2012. This tied visa means that even if a domestic worker escapes from an exploitative or abusive employer, they will become undocumented in the UK and are caught in ongoing cycles of exploitation – these are our modern-day slaves.

Evidence suggests that when domestic workers had the right to leave their employers, and got protection from UK employment laws, it very much improved their negotiating status with employers and prevented future abuse.

Conference agrees with the statement of the House of Commons Joint Committee on Modern Day Slavery which says that; "the case of the domestic worker visa policy changes have intentionally strengthened the hand of the master against the victim of slavery".

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Support the campaign to demand that the government give overseas domestic workers the right to change employers and the eventual right to gain permanent residency in the UK;
- b) Encourage branches and regions to make donations to Kalayaan and the Filipino Domestic Workers' Association;
- c) Work with Labour Link, and relevant self-organised groups in UNISON, including UNISON's Filipino Activists Network and African Migrants Network, to raise the

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profile of human and labour rights' issues of overseas domestic workers with British MPs and policy makers;

- d) Recognise that domestic workers who are looking after the elderly, people with disabilities and young children in private homes are providing a public service and therefore we should examine ways in which we could improve their recruitment into UNISON and use the overseas visa campaign as an organising tool.

Wolverhampton General

54. Welfare and Work: Social Security Provision for All

Conference notes that since 2010 we have witnessed a systematic dismantling of the welfare and social security safety net through huge Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) budget cuts – £30bn in the last 5 yrs and another £12bn of cuts yet to come.

In 2015, UNISON in alliance with cross party peers and social security representative organisations won a good common sense victory for ordinary working people in getting George Osborne's planned cuts to working tax credits to be abandoned completely. It was clear to all that this tax credit cut would hit unfairly and disproportionately three million working families in the UK, resulting in the average loss of £1,350 per year.

Conference further notes the real credit for reversing the Chancellors decision goes to the many brave parents – including UNISON members - who used the UNISON online calculator (over 75,000 calculations) and were willing to talk publicly about their already stretched finances and the distress, anxiety and hardship the cuts would cause. Their stories convinced the government this unfair tax credits grab was clearly wrong.

Cuts and changes to peoples benefit entitlements which will only hurt low income families, the vulnerable, carers, disabled people, the working poor, children in poverty households and young people.

Conference believes that low income families are dependent on tax credits due to the real drop in household wages. The Labour market today does not offer decent wages or secure work. Instead over the last decade we have seen the continuous growth of a low paid economy, particularly in the retail, care, construction and catering hospitality sectors. Sectors blighted by zero hours and other precarious work practices. Job creation focused on part time work rather than full time decent skilled jobs.

We have seen wages in all sectors - private, voluntary and public - continuously decline. Since 2007 earnings alone in the UK have fallen by 8% and under austerity in the public sector workers are now an average £2,000 worse off.

Households and individuals have gone into record debt, rent arrears and poverty is rising.

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Conference believes that the welfare state was created and exists to give working people the support and protection throughout the various stages of their lives. It represents our safety net from the cradle to the grave - family and child support, carers support, employment support, housing support, independent living support for disabled people, support for the vulnerable such as women fleeing domestic violence, the homeless, households in poverty, support for veterans and retired and elderly people.

Conference further believes that fairly funding and administering efficiently a modern UK Welfare State and Social Security system fit for the future and fit to meet the needs of a growing diverse workforce is one of the most complex challenges that we face in UK modern society.

Conference notes that this government is failing to reform the welfare state in a fair, universal and just way that would make work pay for those in receipt of in- work top up benefits and its reforms are not providing adequate employment or benefit support for vulnerable benefit claimants.

Conference further notes that on top of the huge £30 billion welfare cuts (introducing the bedroom tax, housing benefit cap, freezing benefit annual up rating, benefits cap and disability benefit cuts) between 2010 and 2015, the roll out of Universal Credit and Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 will further erode the safety net for working families, unemployed and vulnerable people.

The impact of the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 will impact further:

- 1) The devolving of DWP welfare functions to local authorities leading to a post code lottery, eroding the provisions of a universal welfare state and no longer offering a universal service for all;
- 2) The removal of the child poverty targets and duties set out in the Child Poverty Act removing the duty of the government to measure child poverty and work towards a target to reduce it;
- 3) The level of the Benefit Cap has been lowered further to £23,000 in London and £20,000 in the rest of the country. The cap breaks the link between need and entitlement. To date, more than twice as many children have been hit by the cap as adults, whilst rent arrears and homelessness have increase;
- 4) The extended freeze on working- age benefits from two years to four years will ensure that the lowest income households continue to get poorer;
- 5) The “second wave” of child tax credits and universal credit cuts from 2017, on top of the substantial cuts this year will:
 - a) Introduce a two child limit and abolish child tax credit and universal credit for any third or subsequent child born after 5 April 2017; and
 - b) Remove the higher amount given for a first child, for new families with a child born after 5 April 2017;

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- 6) The abolition of Employment and Support Allowance Work - Related Activity Component for people with disabilities will remove £1,500 a year (approximately £30 a week) off the employment and support allowance paid to claimants who are deemed temporarily unable to work because of illness or disability;
- 7) The removal of Housing Benefit for 18 - 21 year olds and freezing of Local Housing Allowance rates for four years will increase homelessness;
- 8) The implementation of the 1% rent reduction will put many supported housing projects in a position of unprecedented financial vulnerability. This is because supported housing projects do not run large rental surpluses or have substantial reserves. The income loss will lead to loss of provision for many disadvantaged groups such as homeless people, victims of domestic violence, vulnerable young people, ex-offenders and people with learning disabilities;
- 9) The new work conditionality under Universal Credit for parents of pre-school children require parents to start work preparation when their child is two and to fulfil all work related requirements when their child reaches three. It will impact 220,000 parents (75% are single parents) in the first year and will likely put parents under pressure, remove parental choice in caring for young children, create anxiety over problems relating to the funding, sufficiency and quality of the increased childcare needed whilst there is a lack of flexible and part-time jobs for these parents to move into;
- 10) The cumulative impact of these measures means many of them will be affected by a number of different measures concurrently, and as such can suffer a cumulative income shock or uncertainty of situation that has the potential to create a strongly detrimental set of circumstances.

Universal Credit will affect both in and out of work claimants. It will replace all benefits, including tax credits and housing benefit. The timetable for 2016 is that all new all new benefit claimants across the country will claim Universal Credit instead of the legacy benefits it replaces. Most existing benefit claimants will be moved over to Universal Credit during 2016 and 2017.

In 2018 new claims for tax credits will stop, and the families receiving them will start to be switched on to Universal Credit.

Conference notes that the respected Institute for Fiscal Studies estimated 2.6 million working families will be an average of £1,600 a year worse off under UC than they would have been under the current legacy system. The Labour Party has also calculated that 5.5 million working parents are set to be worse off by an average £950 a year because of Universal Credit tax benefit changes.

A detailed report (December 2015) on the roll out of Universal Credit (UC) further showed that in its current form Universal Credit is not fit for purpose due to:

- i) Claimant IT access difficulties and persistent technical problems;
- ii) Payments being made in arrears and failures to explain complex regulations;
- iii) Irregular employment patterns;

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iv) Failure to take in to account real employer payment systems.

This leads to real difficulties when assessments fail to take in to consideration all relevant circumstances leading to difficulties for those with dependents to rent and pay bills. UNISON members working in health, social care and social work see the victims of benefit sanctions and other cuts on a daily basis and can bear witness to their destructive effects.

At the same time access to welfare advice services have been slashed due to cuts in the local government and community and voluntary sectors.

Conference, therefore, calls on the National Executive Council to continue working across the union and with the alliance of campaign groups we have built to:

- A) Promote the Living Wage and pay campaigns to encourage employers to pay staff more - at least the real living wage of £8.25 an hour;
- B) Campaigning on keeping working Tax Credits at the current rate of payments and making sure that the Chancellor does not use the changeover of Working Tax credits into Universal Credits as a way to revive his original plans to cut working tax credits and leave working families worse off in 2020 than today
- C) Campaign for extra welfare funding and more universal guidelines on devolved welfare functions to eradicate the emerging post code lottery;
- D) Repeal the unfair bedroom tax, housing benefit cap and up rating freezes on the Local Housing Allowance and Housing Benefit to adequately meet market rents;
- E) For Universal Credit to be reviewed in terms of its process and structure and benefit entitlements. So that it is fit for purpose for both in work and out of work claimants in terms of easier access, claim navigation support, and fairer and better timed calculations and payments;
- F) Highlight the growth in household poverty and call for the reinstatement of child poverty measurements and government targets to reduce child poverty;
- G) Support welfare rights campaigns relating to equalities, fairness and human rights for women, children, young and elderly, single parents, LGBT people, migrant, black workers, disabled people and carers;
- H) Continue to promote the work of UNISONs charity 'There for You' on debt awareness and support for those in debt and promote our joint work with local Credit Unions to help manage debt and finances;
- I) Highlight the real stories of UNISON members.

National Executive Council

55. Support The Welfare Charter

Conference notes that the United Kingdom is one of the richest countries on earth. One million people use food banks, more than a quarter of children live in poverty,

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and five and a half million adults go without one or more basic clothing necessities, like a warm, waterproof coat.

Conference further notes that through the TUC Unemployed Workers Centres, a Welfare Charter has been established, which calls for:

- 1) A political commitment to full employment achieved with decent jobs. People are entitled to decent, stable and secure jobs that provide regular, guaranteed hours that allows them to also meet any caring responsibilities; not zero hours contracts in precarious jobs;
- 2) A wage you can live on for all and a social security system that works to end poverty. We need a National Living Wage that people can live on, not just survive on, that applies to all;
- 3) No work conscription – keep volunteering voluntary. Forcing people to work for free on pain of losing benefits is simply providing free labour to organisations that should be paying workers proper wages;
- 4) Representation for unemployed workers. Everyone should have access to an advocate to help them navigate the social security system and appeal adverse decisions;
- 5) Appoint an Ombudsman for claimants. A claimants Ombudsman should be appointed to arbitrate on unresolved complaints, to ensure claimants are treated with respect and dignity;
- 6) Equality in the labour market and workplace, equality in access to benefits. We need a labour market where structural inequalities are overturned and a benefit system that is accessible to people;
- 7) An end to the sanctions regime and current Work Capability Assessment - full maintenance for the unemployed and underemployed. We need a non-means tested, non-discriminatory benefit payable to all, with housing costs met. This must be allied with the wide provision of low cost housing;
- 8) State provision of high quality information, advice and guidance on employment, training and careers. There must be a supportive and independent careers and job-broking service, not linked to conditionality or benefits, offering face to face advice.

Conference resolves that UNISON will:

- a) Sign up to and give support to the Welfare Charter;
- b) Raise awareness amongst our membership of the issues raised and the demands made;
- c) Work with TUC Unemployed Workers' Centres and the wider Trade union Movement to help realise the objectives of the Charter.

Salford City

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56. Welfare not Warfare

Conference notes that local government has been the largest casualty of the Conservative government's most recent austerity budget, compounding year on-year cuts that have devastated the employment of UNISON members and the services they provide for local people. Between 2010 and 2015 Local Government has lost £18 billion of funding in real terms, with councils in more deprived areas bearing the greatest share of these cuts. The most deprived all-purpose authorities saw cuts of more than £220 per head compared with under £40 per head for the least deprived.

These cuts have been imposed while the government has also committed the United Kingdom to replacing the Trident nuclear deterrent system with a similar permanent-at-sea submarine based system. The cost of this new system is estimated at £25 billion, rising to a total running cost of £167 billion over the 32 years of its expected operation.

Furthermore the Conservative government has recently committed the UK to joining the air campaign against ISIS/Daesh in Syria. The government has provided no timeframe for how long it expects the UK to be involved in this campaign or what a successful resolution to it will be.

The UK has been involved in conflicts in the Middle East continuously since 2001. As of 2014 a report by the Royal United Service Institute (RUSI) estimated the direct cost to the UK of conflicts since the end of the Cold War at £35 billion; with £29 billion having been spent on the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan since 2001. The eight month in air campaign in Libya in 2011 alone cost £320 million.

The same RUSI report described the UK's involvement in wars in the Middle-East as "strategic failures" and that "far from reducing international terrorism ... the 2003 invasion [of Iraq] had the effect of promoting it. The rise of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) was a reaction to this invasion, and to the consequent marginalisation of Iraq's Sunni population. Today AQAP and other radical jihadist groups stretching across the Iraqi-Syrian border pose new terrorist threats to the UK and its allies."

Civilian casualties resulting from the first four years of the Iraq War are estimated at between 151,000 to over one million.

Between the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts 633 UK service men and women have lost their lives. Thousands more have been seriously injured; many of whom will require substantial medical, psychiatric and other services for the remainder of their lives. These are the same services that have been cut under this government.

As President Eisenhower said in 1952 on the opportunity cost of military spending:

"Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children. [...] Under the cloud of threatening war, it is humanity hanging from a cross of iron."

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Conference believes that today as then unnecessary defence spending and wars of choice are an act of theft from those most at need. Both the renewal of Trident and continued involvement in conflict in the Middle-East cannot be justified in the context of the scale of cuts imposed on other vital areas of government spending.

Conference believes that scarce resources should instead be prioritised on services that the public actually use - social services, elderly care, libraries, social housing, waste management and all the other local services that our people rely upon. This rather than a nuclear deterrent that will never be used and is not truly independent, or on air strikes that recent history has shown will recruit more to the banner of Isis/Daesh and will leave the UK less safe than it was before.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Support branches to take part in protest actions against UK military action in Syria while drawing attention to the cost of conflict in the context of cuts to public services;
- 2) Oppose the UK government's renewal of the Trident nuclear deterrent;
- 3) Work with the Labour Link to ensure that under a future Labour government Strategic Defence Reviews begin on a 'no assumptions' basis and instead develop a realistic, modern view of the UK's place in the world in the 21st Century, the threats it faces, and within the context of an ethical, internationalist foreign policy;
- 4) Work to ensure that the UK government honours its obligations to the veterans of conflicts rather than discharging its responsibility for rehabilitation and support to Third Sector forces charities.

Somerset County

57. Welfare not Warfare

Conference notes:

- 1) That public services like those provided by local governments are the greatest casualties of Chancellor George Osborne's austerity budgets, with year on year cuts that will decimate the employment of UNISON members and services to local people;
- 2) That huge resources are being poured into armaments and conflict with very little benefit to the people of Britain either in terms of jobs or security;
- 3) Only a few thousand jobs are supported by Trident nationwide at the cost of £160billion;
- 4) The war against terror has dragged on 15 years now with no end in sight and a high alert security rating still in place.

Conference believes:

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- a) That UNISON should oppose both the renewal of Trident and the idea of more British involvement in the wars in the Middle East on the basis of cost;
- b) If there is indeed a problem with the budget deficit or a shortage of money in the Treasury, then what resources are available would be better spent on social services, elderly care, libraries, social housing, waste management and all the other local services the public rely on; not a weapons system that can never be used, or a war that will only foster more terrorism.

Conference resolves:

- i) To affiliate to CND and Stop the War nationally and to encourage branches to pass similar motions to do so locally;
- ii) To join peaceful protest actions against British military entanglement in the Middle East and there draw attention to the unacceptable costs of these wars;
- iii) To oppose the renewal of the Trident nuclear deterrent on the grounds of its inflated cost.

Plymouth in UNISON

58. Scrap Trident

Conference notes:

- 1) That the Trident nuclear weapons system is composed of 4 nuclear-armed submarines, each carrying up to 48 nuclear warheads. It will reach the end of its life in 2028 and currently costs taxpayers £2.2bn per year;
- 2) That the government's proposed Trident replacement will cost Britain well over £100bn;
- 3) £81bn is set to be slashed from public services in Britain in this financial year alone;
- 4) That Britain's nuclear weapons system has the power to kill 320 million people;
- 5) That Trident is inordinately expensive and provides a disproportionately tiny number of jobs for the money it consumes.

Conference also notes:

- a) The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament's proposal for Britain to invest in marine energy technology and thus provide workers in the defence industry with alternative employment;
- b) The TUC's proposal for the creation of one million climate jobs.

Conference believes:

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- i) Replacing Trident will waste billions of pounds of taxpayers' money that could better be spent on jobs, pensions, education and health to improve the lives of the British people without threatening the lives of others;
- ii) Replacing Trident undermines Britain's commitment under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty to get rid of its nuclear weapons;
- iii) Replacing Trident will send the wrong signal to non-nuclear weapons states around the world who may seek their own nuclear weapons.

Conference welcomes the campaign pledge from Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn to develop a Defence Diversification policy to ensure socially useful, skilled employment for those workers in industries currently tied into the production of nuclear weapons and delivery systems.

Scottish Labour Party Conference overwhelming supporting the scrapping of Trident and its replacement with the support of the UNISON delegation.

Conference resolves:

- A) To campaign for scrapping of Trident and the cancelling of its replacement;
- B) To affiliate to the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament;
- C) To support future protests and campaigns against nuclear weapons and Trident;
- D) To urge the Labour Link to work in the Labour Party to win policy to scrap trident and oppose its replacement.

Islington

59. 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, charities are often forced to pick up the tab as funding is insufficient. In Scotland, Local Government is bearing the brunt of Scottish government cuts; Scottish Government funding is down by 0.8% yet funding for local government is down by 4.5%.

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Conference supports the Poppy Scotland and Royal British Legion campaign, Insult to Injury, which highlights that some veterans injured during Service are having to 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 the transition from the military, 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 military compensation schemes so local authorities can fully disregard War Disablement Pensions from means test for social care, plus when calculating entitlement to Council Tax Support and Housing Benefit. Further, each government should establish a fund which Councils can access (without 'strings'), to meet additional costs.

South Lanarkshire

60. Support for our Armed Forces

Conference believes that those who often risk and, sometimes give, their lives for their country are entitled to be treated with respect, dignity and proper care.

Conference is well aware that there is often controversy about the deployment of our armed forces. But Conference understands that those who make wars are not those who live or die with the consequences.

Conference is shocked and appalled by the statistics that show former service personnel at serious risk of being homeless and having mental health issues. Conference is angry on behalf of those statistics who are our family members, friends, neighbours – real people with real hardships.

Conference resolves to ask the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Publicise our support for the UK's service personnel through our publications;
- 2) Campaign with appropriate organisations to secure proper respect and value for those damaged as a result of armed service.

Queen Elizabeth Hospital Kings Lynn

61. Demonstrate at the Conservative Party Conference

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Conference notes:

- 1) The Conservative government's continued determination to attack the public sector at every opportunity;
- 2) The Conservative Party plans to hold its Party Conference in Birmingham this year;
- 3) The very good demonstration held in Manchester at the Conservative Party Conference in 2015.

Conference believes that:

- a) There should be thousands of trade union members and supporters marching through Birmingham, taking a clear message to the party about its government's damaging programme of austerity and attacks on the rights of working people and their unions;
- b) That UNISON should stand with the people of Birmingham facing some of the biggest cuts to local authority spending in the country.

Conference resolves to:

- i) Formally support the call for a demonstration at the conference;
- ii) Encourage all branches to attend.

Birmingham

62. Unwelcome the Tory Conference to Birmingham 2016

Conference notes:

- 1) The government's attack on the trade unions with the Trade Union Bill and their systematic attempt to destroy public sector services;
- 2) The 100,000 strong joint TUC/Peoples Assembly demonstration in October 2015 at the Tory Party Conference in Manchester under the slogan 'Take Back Manchester';
- 3) This year 2016 the Tory Party Conference is to be held in Birmingham beginning on the 2nd October.

Conference believes:

- a) That we should make the Tories completely unwelcome in Birmingham in 2016;
- b) That the trade unions should work alongside the Peoples Assembly, community groups, anti-racist groups, Disabled People Against the Cuts and any other organisations that want to help attempt to build the biggest demonstration possible against the Tories in 2016.

Conference therefore resolves:

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- i) To send this motion to West Midlands Regional Council and West Midlands TUC, to request that they initiate a planning meeting regarding the demonstration;
- ii) That the planning meeting involves a diverse range of groups willing to unwelcome the Tories in 2016.

Sandwell General

Economy

63. Fairer Taxation and the Future Funding of our Public Services

Conference is dismayed that nearly six years on from his promise to “fix” the economy and only one month after the 2015 Autumn Statement – in which he said that the government's job is no longer to “rescue Britain”, but to “rebuild Britain” – George Osborne has again returned to the economic politics of austerity and the spectre of international economic problems as an excuse to further slash spending on public services. Conference is also angered by the arrogance of a Chancellor of the Exchequer who told the country in November 2015 that no economy in the G7 has grown faster than the UK in any year since 2010, that government spending will continue to rise and that more than a million extra jobs will be created over the next five years – only for him to say in January 2016 that he was confused why “people think that it’s ‘job done’”.

The last five years have seen massive cuts in public spending, huge public sector redundancies and pay restraint across the public services on an unprecedented scale. George Osborne has already let it slip that the Conservative Party’s plans are no longer about “balancing the books” but that they want to 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 create a fair and balanced 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 governments. These cuts were made on the backs of the poor and disadvantaged, whilst big businesses and wealthy individuals continue to get huge tax cuts. Most public sector workers haven’t had a pay rise in recent years – whilst the profits of big businesses continue to increase and the chief executives of Britain's largest companies earned more by 5 January 2016 than most people will earn in the entire year.

Conference rejects the Conservative Party’s ideology that economic prosperity will only be created by big businesses and the rich and that we must keep their taxes low to incentivise them to act benevolently. Conference also rejects the Conservative Party’s mantra that only reductions in public spending, the introduction of competition into public service provision and the privatisation of nationally provided collective public services will deliver a stable economy for the future. Instead, Conference believes that increasing the wages of the lowest paid members of society and implementing a progressive taxation system, based upon a principle that the more you earn the more you contribute, will provide a fairer balance for funding the public services that are accessed by everyone regardless of their incomes.

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Conference continues to believe that investment in public services must be seen as a cornerstone of a fairer and just society.

Conference believes the UK deserves the best public services and that this can be funded by a permanent bankers' bonus tax which could have raised around £2bn in 2015 alone, reversing the Conservative cuts to corporation tax (which by 2020 will mean big business pays £13bn less in taxes each year) and the reintroduction of a 50% rate of income tax for high earners – to ensure that those who can afford to contribute more to society do so. A fairer taxation system must also include efforts to tackle tax avoidance and evasion as well as the introduction of a financial transactions tax.

UNISON believes that a fairer system of taxation is not about punishing success – but instead is the basis for economic success and is also the key to achieving social reforms such as ending child and pensioner poverty, ending low pay and saving our natural resources. A modern taxation system for modern public services can ensure everyone can access high quality public services.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to support campaigns for the fair funding of public services through a fair system of taxation. Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to do this by:

- 1) Working with the TUC, Scottish TUC, Welsh TUC and Irish Congress of Trade Unions and partners across civil society and campaign groups to establish a model for a fairer and more stable systems of taxation specifically to fund public services;
- 2) Commission research for a funding models for local government, Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland which ensures that public services are properly funded but not at the expense of individual areas, regions or nations;
- 3) Continue to monitor and campaign around English devolution;
- 4) Explore protecting access to certain public services in law to ensure their funding is protected appropriately;
- 5) Campaign to oppose the myth that higher taxes are a punishment and encourage people to view taxation as contributions towards the provision of excellent public services for everyone;
- 6) Continue to campaign for a 'Robin Hood Tax' on financial transactions;
- 7) In light of the above, amend and re-issue UNISON's alternative economic strategy and encourage its use as a campaigning and educational tool;
- 8) Working with the Labour Party, through Labour-Link, to develop an economic policy which rejects austerity, but ensures that a credible and robust plan for UK Government and the devolved institutions can be put in place to support fairly funded public services, public investment, job security and the raising of living standards.

National Executive Council

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64. Austerity and Our Local Economies

The North East is not alone in still feeling the increasing and cumulative effects of austerity since the financial crash of 2008 with continued cuts to public services and jobs. The cumulative effect of a lost decade of investment and wage growth across both public and private sectors is still being felt as the region struggles to revive and inequality grows at all levels, seen in high youth unemployment, food bank usage, museum closures, voluntary sector grant cuts, closing children's centres and rising mental health referrals, to name but a few.

Where steel and public sector jobs have gone, their replacements are usually lower paid and casualised.

Public and civic investment is vital in our regions and has never been cheaper with low interest rates for public borrowing.

Local Government cuts are severe in the North East, forcing councils back to the mere statutory minimum of service delivery, and sometimes below. Business Rate retention in years to come will not offer much hope to our local authorities and services. The possible extra 2% on Council Tax for social care doesn't raise much if you have a low local property tax base and low business start-ups.

The Northern Powerhouse must not be empty rhetoric linked to overall budget cuts and a few prestige projects. It needs grass roots investment in public services.

The make-up of Local Enterprise Partnership boards show too narrow a focus on partnerships between business representatives, higher education establishments and local authority leaders, which leads to the exclusion of other important social, economic and environmental partners including trade unions.

The so called 'National Living Wage' of £7.20 an hour for the over 25s will benefit the North East but it is not a real living wage, nor a panacea to tax credit cuts, rent rises and other pressures on the cost of living.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to campaign for:

- 1) An end to public sector job cuts and a genuine regional regeneration programme with public financial investment being used as the 'seed corn' to grow regional economies and provide jobs, based around a programme of supporting large and medium-scale infrastructure programmes (such as developing local rail and rapid-transit networks) and large-scale building of desperately-needed social housing by local authorities;
- 2) An end to the 'right-to-buy' provisions imposed upon local councils and housing associations;
- 3) Fairer funding formulas, property tax systems and a 'Robin Hood Tax', which represents a relatively small tax on the financial sector that could generate billions of pounds annually to fight poverty at home and abroad;
- 4) Support for the UK Steel industry and funded regional growth plans.

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Northern Region

65. Austerity – How much worse will it get for Black members?

Since the disastrous election of a majority Tory Government in May 2015 the impact of public sector and welfare cuts has worsened for Black people.

The Tories first budget has deepened austerity with more than 1.25 million Black households and 4 million Black people worse off under the range of budget measures that will continue to have a negative and disproportionate impact on Black people.

Black households are more likely to be living in poverty with child poverty rates at nearly 50% for Pakistani children and over 40% for Bangladeshi children. Cuts to tax credits, part-time working changes, and benefit caps on households with more than two children will exacerbate the situation for Black families.

A report from Runnymede Trust 'The 2015 Budget – Effects on Black and minority ethnic people' found that:

- 1) Cuts and freezes in tax credits are up to five times more likely to adversely affect Black people than white people as more Black people work part time than white people;
- 2) Youth unemployment has risen by 49% over the past five years amongst Black people compared to a 2% fall among young white people;
- 3) Nearly half of all overcrowded households in Britain are among Black people but the government is now restricting housing benefit for people in their late teens and early twenties;
- 4) Among young Black people affected by this change, many will be living in overcrowded households, sharing bedrooms with younger siblings, and so these changes are more likely to negatively affect housing quality among Black families and young people;
- 5) Further reduction in the Benefit Cap will hit Black workers the hardest as 40% of those affected by the benefit cap are Black workers although Black people make up just 14% of the population;
- 6) Black people make up 16% of Jobseekers Allowance claimants, 16% of lone parents claiming income support and 9% of those on Employment and Support Allowance (ESA);
- 7) Cutting Child Tax Credits and housing benefit for families with more than 2 children will increase Black child poverty rates and racial inequalities as 24% of Black families have more than 2 children compared to 8% of white households.

The report concludes that 'the cumulative effect of the budget may become even more unfair over time'.

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It is imperative that UNISON Black members be at the forefront of campaigns against the cuts and austerity. Therefore Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to work with the National Black members committee to:

- a) Consider building for a national demonstration against austerity seeking to ensure strong UNISON representation;
- b) Support and encourage UNISON Black members to stand as elected representatives as local councillors and MPs fighting against austerity and cuts;
- c) Encourage members to step up the work with local community organisations fighting cuts and austerity;
- d) Raise this as a priority issue with the TUC Race Relations Committee with the intention to step up the work with other trade union groups and local trade councils fighting the cuts;
- e) Seek to work with service groups to incorporate the impact of cuts on Black members in those areas into relevant campaigns.

National Black Members' Committee

66. Challenging Poverty

Within recent months UNISON has highlighted growing inequality and deepening poverty across the UK. At the same time, UNISON at the centre and across our regions has been pursuing a range of demands aimed at reducing poverty in the face of mounting evidence that current UK and devolved government strategies to tackle poverty have failed.

This failure is evidenced by the most recent Joseph Rowntree Foundation report (Monitoring Poverty and Social Exclusion 2015) which shows that:

- 1) Over 13 million people in the UK (21%) continue to live in low-income households;
- 2) 3.7m children (28%) live in poverty;
- 3) 50%+ of those in poverty live in working families, a growing number of which are UNISON members.

To effectively tackle poverty it is essential that Governments put poverty reduction at the core of their economic and social policies and ensure that anti-poverty strategies are underpinned by an equality and human rights based approach. Such an approach goes much further than the usual self-contained set of actions and targets in traditional anti-poverty strategies. It requires that Governments:

- a) Apply human rights laws and international obligations;
- b) Empower poor people themselves;

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- c) Mainstream principles of universality, non-discrimination and equality, participatory decision-making, accountability and the recognition of the inter-dependence of rights;
- d) Combine anti-poverty strategies with equality strategies that tie the allocation of resources to neutral 'objective need' criteria that measure deprivation irrespective of community background or other affiliation.

In pursuit of the above framework, Conference calls on the National Executive Council:

- i) To continue to make anti-poverty work a UNISON priority;
- ii) To encourage and facilitate work between, and across, regions and the centre;
- iii) To share information on the strategies being adopted across the four Governments;
- iv) To promote and encourage collaborative work with our allies in anti-poverty, equality and human rights networks;
- v) To highlight successful political and legal interventions to strengthen our campaign.

Northern Ireland Region

67. Universal Basic Income

Universal (or Unconditional) Basic Income, also known as Citizen's Income, is a redistributive policy proposal that has been around for centuries, and is once again making headlines. It was advocated by Martin Luther King, Jr. shortly before his death, among many others.

The idea is that every single citizen, as a non-withdrawable right, receives a guaranteed monthly income that is sufficient to cover the basics for survival. 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 could improve which would also create savings for society as well as improving people's living standards considerably.

In recent months debate around Universal Basic Income has exploded and there are now movements pushing for it in many countries around the world. Governments in Finland, Netherlands, France, Canada and Brazil are committed to investigating it through pilot studies. Switzerland will hold a referendum on a Universal Basic Income this year, and leading think tanks and economists in the UK and US also believe it to be a necessary direction of travel. There have already been studies and comparable schemes in India, Namibia, Canada and Alaska with exciting results.

Universal Basic Income gives people dignity, a secure floor to stand on, and relief from stress. It's simple, fair and unifying – it ends divisive narratives about who does

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or doesn't deserve to eat or have a home. Many more of us would be able to job share. Our members could find more time and energy to be active in the union, or do other volunteering. The economy gets a kickstart as people have more to spend.

All of the above, plus the potential benefits for young people, for women, for low paid workers, for people struggling to navigate a precarious job market, and for those needing to leave abusive relationships, means that a Universal Basic Income, in principle, would be in the interests of our members and communities.

Conference affirms that UNISON supports in principle the introduction of a Universal Basic Income in this country.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to investigate, through the Policy Committee, the detail of what UNISON's preferred Universal Basic Income policy would look like. This should include costings, sources of funding (including new funding streams that do not yet exist), methods of implementation and ideal amount.

West Midlands Community

68. Workers Under Attack

Conference notes that with regard to defending the living standards and rights of working people, the hypocrisy of the current Tory government has now potentially reached an all time low, even bettering the Thatcherite governments of the eighties and nineties in terms of claiming to support workers whilst at the same time attacking them. The Prime Minister and his Chancellor, as well as other ministers, claim to be on the side of "hard-working people" and on some occasions portray the Tories as actually being "the worker's party". The reality is that the government is destroying most of what is left of the welfare state and mounting a full-scale assault on the working class in Britain.

Some of the elements of this are as follows:

- 1) A continuing attack on welfare benefits. Despite the Chancellor, George Osborne's u-turn on working tax credits in his 2015 autumn statement, this as a result of opposition both within parliament and outside of it, the government continues to move against tax credits and other welfare benefits and the roll-out of Universal Credit will force even greater numbers into poverty;
- 2) A continuing clampdown on public sector pay which means that it has fallen by approximately 20% in real term;
- 3) Rebranding of the Minimum Wage to the Living Wage which will in fact render it socially acceptable to pay the lowest possible wages;
- 4) A further proposed attack on workplace pensions that could see additional taxes on pensions;
- 5) The "Pay to stay" legislation in the Housing and Planning bill which will force households on income of over £40,000 in London and £30,000 outside of it to pay exorbitant market rents;

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- 6) The massive cuts in public services that workers rely on a daily basis;
- 7) Specific attacks on disabled people including cuts to the Employment Support Allowance and changes to the Motability Scheme which has meant large numbers of people losing specially adapted vehicles which are often their only possible mode of transport and way of getting to work.

UNISON opposes the government's crude attempts to promote false division between those who are on benefits and those who are working. The union will call for an end to the punitive attacks on welfare benefits including caps and sanctions. Benefits should continue to provide a safety net for those on low wages and those with no wages.

UNISON unequivocally rejects statements from the Tory party that they are in anyway "the workers party" or represent working people.

UNISON agrees to campaign, where possible with other unions, the TUC, community groups and the Labour Party, in order to highlight the above issues.

When campaigning on pay UNISON will highlight the links between the above attacks on working people including in any industrial action taken by UNISON members.

UNISON will campaign along with other unions for a £10 living wage to become the minimum wage.

Islington

69. Democratic Socialism

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 the super-rich 1% with 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 public 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;

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- 2) The nationalised banks to offer cheap loans and mortgages for housing and for the planned development of industry, services and 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;
- 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

Employment Rights

70. Access to Work

The Access to Work (AtW) programme is a fund that helps disabled people start a new job, or remain in employment, with practical support for “reasonable adjustments”, which employers are required to make by law. Without AtW many disabled people would be prevented from doing their jobs because of the barriers they face; for those looking for employment, some may face considerable difficulty in such a competitive marketplace, as employers will be concerned about extra costs involved if they employ a disabled person.

The Works and Pensions Select Committee inquiry report - “Improving Access to Work for Disabled People” - stated that staff from the Department for Work and Pensions often failed to understand the needs of disabled people and that the AtW programme was helping only a minority of the people it could benefit, due to inadequate funding and a lack of awareness of the programme. The previous Government didn’t respond to the report, however, The Department for Works and Pensions’ Impact Assessment of this report was published the day after the General Election. One of the areas covered was “Value for Money Reforms” and the first option proposed was to set a cap on the maximum value of support per user. The Impact Assessment also states that “we must achieve a balance between meeting customer need and achieving value for money for the taxpayer”.

Deaf people experience particular difficulty using the Access to Work Scheme because the process for booking sign language interpreters isn’t accessible. Accessible advice should be provided by the Department for Work and Pensions in BSL about how to book interpreter services, whether agency fees should be met from the Deaf person’s budget (including whether 20% Value Added Tax should be

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met by the Deaf person's allowance), confirmation and cancellation arrangements, invoicing and payment options. Access to work should advise where Deaf people should find qualified interpreters who are regulated by one of the UK regulatory bodies - i.e. Regulatory Body for Sign Language Interpreters and Translators, National Register of Communication Professionals working with Deaf and Deaf/Blind People and the Scottish Association of Sign Language Interpreters. Services for Deaf people should be available through a computerised system that is accessible, as delays in payments for interpreters affects the number of interpreters available and reduces it to only those willing to wait an unreasonable amount of time before payment of fees is processed for services already provided.

Conference under the new proposals, disabled people may not have put in place the reasonable adjustments they require which could affect their performance at work and some employers will interpret this as a capability issue, which could lead to dismissal. Until now, individuals could seek an unlimited award to assist them into work but since October 2015 there is now a cap on how much the £108m fund can pay to people who use it. Access to Work will only provide awards up to a limit set at one and half times average salary (a limit of £40,800 per person per year). We understand that, in particular, the DWP are considering limiting support for travel costs within work which could mean that disabled people who need to travel during work will no longer be provided with taxis. Unfortunately not all employers will be prepared or able to afford to pay for this support, putting the jobs of these disabled workers at risk. Additionally it could be particularly damaging to those who need expensive equipment to function in the workplace or those who have Personal Assistants. The Government wants to make £12billion in welfare savings and those using AtW are going to find it more difficult to receive the funding they require.

When the public sector is faced with massive cuts to their budgets and staff are being made redundant, disabled people are more than likely to be the ones who will be selected for redundancy. Now that the Department for Works and Pensions is openly talking about "value for money for the taxpayer" disabled people are more vulnerable than ever.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to work with the National Disabled Members' Committee and Labour Link to:

- 1) Raise grave concerns with the Department for Work and Pensions regarding the findings of the Impact Assessment on the Improving Access to Work for Disabled People Report;
- 2) To work with other unions to lobby the Government with regard to the impact of Access To Work cuts and to mount a campaign making it clear that disabled people do want to work and yet the support we need to be in work is under threat;
- 3) To update (if necessary) the UNISON Branch Guidance on "Using the DWP's Access to Work Scheme for Disabled Members" and to promote to members/activists so that they are aware of the process for applying for AtW or employer sponsored support in the workplace and include advice to ensure employers meet the shortfall in funding;

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- 4) Write to all branches highlighting the changes in provision by AtW to make them aware of the changes to funding and the impact this may have on their disabled members who are in receipt of this support;
- 5) Publicise the AtW scheme in UNISON eFocus and U Magazine using case studies of where it works well but also highlighting issues that disabled people face when they are unable to put in place adjustments they require for them to effectively do their job;
- 6) Work with the appropriate UNISON structures to ensure that the issues regarding changes to AtW provision are widely known so that they can be raised in negotiation with employers;
- 7) To continue to use all channels available to it to influence government bodies, especially the Department for Work and Pensions to improve resources to support disabled people's opportunities to have paid work;
- 8) To consult with deaf caucus members, the deaf community and Interpreter Professional organisations with regard to campaigning for a consistent hourly rate for British Sign Language Interpreters.

National Disabled Members Committee

71. Access To Work

Access to work (ATW) is a grey area for many of our managers. Many managers still question the competency of disabled employees carrying out their job and have little or no understanding of how the access to work process runs, or how it can benefit our disabled members in the workplace. Access to Work can help disabled members remain part of the workforce, without extra added cost to the employer.

ATW provides advice and practical support to the disabled who are employed, self-employed or unemployed and about to start a job or work scheme. Jobs can be part-time or full-time or temporary or permanent, and the scheme has recently been extended to include disabled people on traineeships, supported internships, work trials and work academies.

The scheme provides grants to help pay for the extra employment cost of working with a disability. This can include funding for:

- 1) Special aids or equipment to use in the workplace such as specialist software or computer access equipment including speech recognition software;
- 2) Support worker to provide one to one support in the workplace such as a British Sign Language Interpreter or personal reader for dyslexics, blind or visually impaired;
- 3) Travel to work if public transport cannot be used due to health or disability and help with adaptations to vehicles;
- 4) Travel in work to pay for the extra cost of travel while at work;

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- 5) Communication support at job interviews for an interpreter or other one to one support for someone who has difficulties in communicating with others;
- 6) Adaptations to existing (but not new) buildings.

Conference asks that our branches work alongside the National Executive Council, National Disabled Committee and Disabled Members Self Organised Groups to produce training material and advice and guidance so that stewards and branch officers have a greater understanding of ATW, and can therefore assist disabled members in the workplace.

Newcastle City

72. Disabled Women and their Working Rights – A Trade Union Issue

Conference, there are many areas of difficulty for disabled women to maintain appropriate or suitable employment and career progression.

The obstacles can be vast from workplace sickness procedures that disproportionately impact on women, caring responsibilities, inequality in gender related pay and accessible support to manage their disability.

Conference, welcomes the TUC comprehensive research on disability and employment published in May 2015. The percentage of employment rate for all disabled people was recorded at 46.4 per cent, compared with employment rate for non-disabled people across the UK at 79.1 per cent, a much higher figure.

The research also highlighted particular concern for disabled people with mental health illness, phobias or anxieties as the percentage rate was an appalling 22.8 per cent and were amongst the worst treated of all disabled people.

With these research findings, Conference, we call on the National Executive Council to work with the National Disabled Members Committee and National Women's Committee to:

- 1) Promote and campaign that employers comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty that seeks to address the issue of reasonable adjustments for disabled people in the workplace;
- 2) Explore and seek to review with national employer bodies if their Sickness Policies have had a disproportionate impacted on disabled people in the workplace, especially women workers;
- 3) Explore the possibility of doing a Freedom of Information Request in 2016/2017 in conjunction with bullet point 2;
- 4) Raise awareness of the Access to Work available to support disabled workers in the workplace;
- 5) Work to promote the importance of career progression, appropriate training and reasonable adjustments for all disabled workers.

Hammersmith and Fulham

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Pensions

73. Campaign for a Living Pension

Elderly and retired people deserve to have a decent state pension.

Conference asserts that the state pension is not a benefit but is ours by right.

Conference believes that older people are being hit particularly hard by current austerity measures.

The basic State Retirement Pension which for many from April, 2016 will be £119.30 (for a single person) is well below the poverty line and is hardly an adequate amount to live on, even in the most modest of households. The TUC assesses that pensioners need an amount that is higher still than this.

Even the Daily Telegraph has reported Britain as being one of the worst places in Europe for State Pension, countries like Austria, Finland and Belgium were rated above average, while maintaining relatively strong public finances. We are told we are recovering as a country financially, yet we live with this shame that our pensioners live well below the poverty line.

We have contributed and continue to contribute to a system which is grossly unfair. Britain is also reported to be at the bottom of the world league tables.

With an ageing population there can be no excuse for paying one of the worst pensions in Europe, despite Britain being the fifth wealthiest country in the world.

31,000 pensioners died of hypothermia in 2012/13 (Daily Telegraph 16 November 2013) despite the winter fuel allowance. The number was double that of five years previously.

The current system lets women down because care responsibilities have affected patterns of work and contributions towards pension.

Taking into account the cost of housing, fuel bills, food costs and health conditions, many older people are struggling to survive and to have the dignity and security they deserve in retirement.

We need a decent state retirement pension that enables us to live rather than exist and is fair to all.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to continue to highlight this issue as a priority.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to liaise with UNISON's Retired Members' Organisation, the National Pensioners Convention and other appropriate bodies and groups to campaign involving all levels of the membership to achieve a Living Pension which calls for:

- 1) A weekly State Retirement Pension which allows every pensioner to pay for necessities and enjoy social and leisure activity; with a top up for pensioners who receive no other income who would otherwise fall below the poverty line;

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- 2) A State Retirement Pension equal to the full new state pension of £155.65 per week (rate at April 2016) for all pensioners so that no one has to claim pension credit;
- 3) Pension equality available to all age qualified citizens; by reducing the new 35 year qualifying period;
- 4) Pension increases every year measured by average earnings increase, Retail Price Index, Consumer Prices Index or 2.5%, whichever is highest;
- 5) Defence of the current triple lock from increasing attack;
- 6) Consideration to be given to replacing the RPI and CPI by an index that more accurately reflects the increase in costs for pensioners and for this to be applied to work place pensions as well as the State pension;
- 7) The National Insurance Fund to be ring fenced;
- 8) Intergenerational unfairness to be addressed by improving the pension prospects of the younger generations and oppose attempts to dumb down the rights of pensioners;
- 9) Dignity and security in retirement.

National Retired Members Organisation

74. Women and the State Pension

Conference notes that the new single tier pension due to be introduced in April 2016 will fail to alleviate pensioner poverty not least because it is discriminatory against women.

It is generally impossible for women to accrue the same level of occupational and state pension as men because of low pay, part-time working, time off for childcare, caring for elderly relatives and poor long term health. Many low paid workers including some care workers, the majority of whom are women, are on zero-hours contracts and treated as self-employed, meaning their employer does not pay their National Insurance and most of these workers have no other form of pension.

This will be compounded as the number of contribution years will rise from 30 to 35 years and many more will be unable to accrue a full state pension.

Currently three quarters of all women pensioners live at or below the poverty line. The current basic state pension is £115. The proposed single tier pension is likely to be £150, well short of the £193 calculated by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation as necessary for a minimum standard of living.

Only 48% of women currently get a full state pension compared to 80% of men.

Furthermore, women born on or after 6 April 1953 will receive the new state pension but those born between 6 April 1951 and 6 April 1953 will not; despite men born within those dates being eligible. This discrimination is a result of earlier legislation to equalise the age at which men and women can draw the state pension.

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Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to work with Labour Link, National Retired Members Committee and others including TUC National Pensioners Convention and Scottish Pensioners Forum to:

- a) Raise awareness of the disparity between womens' and mens' pensions and the disproportionate impact on women of pensioner poverty;
- b) Campaign to right this injustice.

South West Region

International

75. Opposing DFID'S Privatisation Agenda

Conference is concerned that the UK government's Department for International Development (DFID) is aggressively promoting the private sector as an alternative provider of public services globally.

Traditionally privatisation, driven by the international finance institutions, has been promoted in infrastructure projects, particularly water, sanitation and energy, often with terrible consequences, but increasingly DFID is promoting a stronger role for the private sector in education and health.

In education DFID has been promoting the role of private and low fee schools as an alternative to publically run schools, including through its investment arm, the CDC Group. One preferred model, which has striking similarities to the 'school's pence' system, abolished in Britain in 1891, involves low daily fees, large classes and unqualified teachers with very little training, instructed to read a lesson from a hand-held computer.

Conference believes this investment in private and part-private education as an alternative to publically provided education, increases inequality, drives down standards and undermines publically provided education. It damages the opportunities of children from poorer backgrounds and is counter to the sustainable development goal on free, equitable and quality education.

In healthcare the privatisation agenda is far more advanced. Since the 1980s the international finance institutions have been encouraging low income countries to open up their health markets to foreign investors.

In recent years the UK government has been promoting various forms of private and part private healthcare provision in low income countries, particularly Public Private Partnerships (PPPs). These include promoting the UK as "world leader in healthcare PPPs" and DFID support for the establishment of a PPP advisory facility at the International Finance Corporation. The approval of the Sustainable Development Goal on universal access to healthcare is likely to be seen by the UK government and many multinational companies as an opportunity for massive expansion in private healthcare provision, to the detriment of public services.

Conference further believes that public healthcare systems produce efficiencies of scale, are better able to control costs and have lower administrative costs. They are more effective and efficient in meeting the health care needs of the whole population,

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lead to better health outcomes and help reduce inequality. Private and part private healthcare systems on the other hand are more expensive to run, are primarily accountable to shareholders, disadvantage the poorest and further erode public services.

Where healthcare is provided for free, it is much more likely to be accessed by the poorest. Where it is paid for, even at low cost, it can absorb a significant proportion of the income of the poorest in society, forcing women in particular to choose between education, health, shelter or food.

Conference recognises the work by education unions to highlight DFID's privatisation agenda in education, but is concerned by the lack of focus on the privatisation of healthcare.

Conference welcomes UNISON's work with the global union, Public Services International (PSI), to support health unions in Ebola-affected countries in West Africa to campaign for decent public health services.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Highlight and oppose DFID and the UK government's aggressive promotion of private and part private healthcare and education provision in low income countries;
- 2) Promote the value of decent public health and education services;
- 3) Work with PSI, sister unions and progressive NGOs to achieve this.

National Executive Council

76. Eradicating Exploitation in Supply Chains

Conference remembers the events of Aril 2013, when the Rana Plaza disaster in Bangladesh took place. Over 1,100 workers, mostly young women, were crushed to death. Conference notes with dismay the fact that people had been forced to work in a building they knew to be so unsafe as to be on the verge of collapse. Threats to workers that they would be fired if they did not do their shift forced many workers into the building that ended up taking the lives of many, and destroying the lives of scores more. Conference commends the National Executive Council for implementing an emergency motion to support workers in the garment industry to campaign for their right to freedom of association. Conference further notes the creation of a fund to support the trade union office of the Bangladesh Revolutionary Garment Workers Federation (BRGWF), and encourages regions and branches to continue to support this initiative.

Conference is aware that Rana Plaza was not the first avoidable disaster to take place in the expanding manufacturing industry of Asia that supplies UK buyers, including high street retailers, the NHS, local government and private companies providing public services, with garments, safety wear and footwear. Conference sympathises with the victims of other disasters in the manufacturing industry including the more than one hundred workers who died in the Tazreen fire in Bangladesh, the 254 people who died in the Ali Enterprises fire in Pakistan in 2012

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and the 72 people who perished in the Kentex slipper (flip-flop) factory in the Philippines in 2015. Conference notes that countless other incidents took place that did not make headlines.

Conference recognises that precarious work is becoming a growing occurrence across the world as some governments seek to develop their economies at the expense of their workforces. Precarious work include workers being forced to work extremely long hours for very little or no pay, sometimes in very hazardous conditions including unsafe buildings; the growing use of child labour; the absence of contracts; not allowing workers to join unions; and the use of physical and sexual violence against workers. 11% of British business leaders polled through YouGov admitted that it was “likely” modern slavery was playing a part in their supply chains. Conference believes that British businesses must abide by their obligations to ensure there is no abuse in their supply chains.

Decent work, a key objective of the Strategic Development Goals (SDGs), has been downgraded in favour of rapid development as workers are being denied their fundamental rights. The removal of legally-binding rights is becoming more widespread as governments introduce legislation to create more ‘flexibility’ in the labour market: a euphemism for rolling back hard-won trade union and workers’ rights. The UK government, keen to break the back of the trade union movement in this country, is pushing ahead with the Trade Union Bill, a draconian piece of legislation designed to make trade unions completely ineffective in representing the interests of their members.

Conference notes that modern slavery, including forced and bonded labour, is becoming more widespread. It is estimated that as many as 13,000 people are enslaved in the UK. Conference is pleased that the Modern Slavery Act was introduced in the UK in 2015 but is concerned that loopholes exempt British companies from obligations under the Act if the goods or services they procure are not destined for the UK market. Conference believes this loophole must be closed.

Conference notes that 7,000 migrant workers are expected to die in Qatar building the infrastructure for the World Cup in 2022. Conference calls on British companies with contracts in Qatar to investigate the allegations of abuse.

Conference believes that UNISON members working in the NHS, local government and in private companies providing public services have a role to play in ensuring their employer sources ethically and ensure there is no exploitation in their supply chains.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Encourage members to engage with their employers to ensure that clothing, footwear and other goods are ethically procured;
- 2) Support campaigns to amend the Modern Slavery Act so that UK companies are held responsible for abuses in their supply chains where goods or services are not destined for the UK, e.g. the construction industry in Qatar;

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- 3) Work with trade unions and non governmental organisations (NGOs), including Labour Behind the Label, to support workers making goods destined for the UK market, in their campaigns for fundamental rights at work;
- 4) Support calls for ratification of the International Labour Organisations (ILO) Forced Labour protocol;
- 5) Encourage branches and regions to affiliate to Anti Slavery International and Labour Behind the Label;
- 6) Encourage branches and regions to get involved in the TUC's Playfair Qatar campaign.

National Executive Council

77. The Crisis in Syria

Conference notes that for the last five years the people of Syria have suffered appalling levels of suffering, death and destruction, with over 250,000 lives lost since March 2011 and over 11 million forced to leave their homes. Indiscriminate attacks on civilian areas continue to be commonplace, including the use of torture, rape, murder, disappearances and mass civilian suffering. Syria's education, health, electricity, water and sanitation systems have come under regular attack and are in a state of collapse. By the end of 2015 over 12.2 million people inside Syria were in need of humanitarian assistance, and 80 per cent of Syrians lived in poverty, 30 per cent of them in abject poverty.

The conflict in Syria has escalated into a complex proxy war involving regional and global powers seeking to exert or retain their influence. It has created the conditions for the rapid growth of so called Islamic State or Da'esh, a violent extremist group with control over large areas of Syria and Iraq, responsible for appalling acts of terrorism and widespread attacks against civilians, including gross violations of human rights and international law.

Conference condemns the group calling itself Islamic State and recognises the threat it poses to regional and international peace and security. Those responsible for terrorist acts, violations of international humanitarian law or human rights abuses must be held accountable.

Conference believes that the situation in Syria requires an urgent and substantial response from the international community, coordinated by the United Nations and in line with international law. Only through a political solution with disarmament, dialogue, democracy, respect for human rights and support for the civilian population will a lasting solution be achieved.

Conference is deeply concerned that external military intervention will result in further human suffering and destabilise an already precarious situation in the region. The British government's strategy of bombing so called Islamic State targets, without clear plans for action on the ground, will inevitably result in the death of civilians and make life even more desperate for the Syrian people.

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The conflict in Syria has resulted in the largest refugee crisis in decades. Millions of people have been forced to flee their homes in order to survive. The vast majority of those fleeing the conflict have remained in the main host countries of Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt, although many countries in the Middle East have refused to accept any refugees. Conference is concerned that humanitarian efforts to support these refugees have been undermined by the unwillingness of rich countries to contribute. Many refugees are forced to live below the poverty line and face discrimination, exploitation and have no access to education, health, housing or work.

Conference believes that refugees should be protected from exploitation, forced labour and discrimination and have access to education, healthcare, housing and work, without risk of deportation, or detention without legitimate reason.

Approximately 10 per cent of Syrian refugees have sought safety in Europe. However, many have died making the perilous journey across the Mediterranean Sea. Conference believes that Europe has a moral and legal responsibility to support refugees and should significantly upscale its resettlement programme. Conference welcomes the efforts by those European countries who have committed to resettle the majority of refugees in Europe, but notes that excluding Germany and Sweden, the remaining 26 EU countries have pledged to resettle a tiny fraction of Syrian refugees currently in the main host countries.

The UK government in particular has done little to respond to the refugee crisis, committing to resettle just 20,000 refugees over five years. Conference is concerned that by January 2016 the UK had accepted only 1,000 Syrian refugees and urges the government to do all that it can to respond to the crisis and significantly scale up its resettlement programme.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Call for an urgent and substantial international political and humanitarian response to the Syrian crisis based on dialogue, peace, disarmament and respect for human rights and international law instead of external military intervention;
- 2) Urge the British government and the European Union to significantly increase its refugee resettlement programme;
- 3) Work with groups supporting and campaigning for the rights of refugees and opposing military intervention in pursuit of these ends.

Newcastle City

78. Stop the bombing of Syria

Conference totally opposes the government's decision to bomb Syria. We condemn those MPs, both Tory and Labour who voted for bombing. We support the stance of Labour Leader Jeremy Corbyn who has opposed the move to war.

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Conference believes that more bombing will only pour fuel on the fire and increase the bitterness across the Middle East that has bred ISIS. Bombing Syria will only make a repetition of the terrible events in Paris more likely.

Conference further believes that the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were a disaster and laid the basis for the present situation. Cameron's government and those Labour MPs who backed him are repeating the same terrible mistakes made by the Blair government.

Conference reaffirms its full support for the Stop the War Coalition and its continuing campaign against war in the Middle East and calls upon regions and branches to affiliate and support its activities.

*London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority
York City*

79. Support Peace Negotiations in Turkey

Conference condemns the recent state violence carried out against the Kurdish community in Turkey and the use of curfews to terrorise inhabitants. In January a report by the Turkish Human Rights foundation stated that 162 civilians (among them 29 adult women, 32 children and 24 people over the age of 60) have been killed in the districts in South East Turkey where curfews have been declared. These deaths also included trade union members.

Conference notes that peace negotiations between Kurdish leader Abdullah Ocalan, Kurdish politicians and Turkish government officials, which had taken place during a 2 year ceasefire by the PKK, were ended in early 2015 by Turkish President Erdogan and that since then there has been rising violence. This included the bomb attacks on the trade union organised Peace and Democracy demonstration in Ankara in October 2015 where over 100 people died.

Conference acknowledges the role of the progressive trade unions in Turkey, specifically the confederations of KESK and DISK, in seeking to promote peace, human rights and democracy, without aligning themselves to any political party.

Conference notes the success of the pro-Kurdish and progressive HDP (Peoples' Democracy Party) in securing 13% of the votes in the June election and, despite high levels of intimidation by the state and ISIS, 11% in the November election, on both occasions breaking the 10% barrier of the national vote rule to achieve parliamentary representation. It is noted that 40% of their successful candidates were women and this included the first Ezidi woman and the first openly gay members of the Turkish parliament.

Conference also notes that whilst the Kurdish people in Rojava in Syria have heroically defended themselves and pushed back the barbarians of Daesh/ISIS, with support from PKK and others, and established democratic, secular and gender-equal administrations the Turkish government allowed Daesh fighters, supplies and stolen oil to cross their borders and refused to do anything to stop the siege of Kobane.

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In South Kurdistan in Iraq it has been PKK and Kurdish Peshmerga fighters who recently pushed Daesh out of Sinjar rescuing hundreds of Ezidi women whilst the Turkish Government has bombed PKK bases, killing civilians.

Conference recognises that:

- 1) Peace and security in Turkey requires negotiations between the government and representatives of the Kurdish people to be re-started and that this should include Ocalan as a key recognised Kurdish leader;
- 2) The Turkish state has used violence and intimidation against their opponents including trade unions, journalists, academics, as well as Kurds and other political opponents;
- 3) The Turkish government has been complicit in the rise of Daesh and failed to prevent supplies, arms and money reaching them and have contributed to the disaster of the Syrian conflicts.

Conference agrees to:

- a) Support the development of links with trade unions, women and youth groups in Turkey including the Kurdish movement and offer support in their efforts to build peace;
- b) Call for an end to violence on all sides to create the opportunity for genuine and meaningful peace negotiations;
- c) Call for the release of Abdullah Ocalan from prison to enable him to participate fully in peace negotiations;
- d) Support the efforts to rebuild Kobane and support the struggle against Daesh;
- e) Write to the Turkish government calling on them to put a stop to the curfews and violence and to re-start peace negotiations with Kurdish Leaders.

South Lanarkshire

80. Support peace negotiations in Turkey

Conference condemns the recent violence carried out against the Kurdish community in Turkey and the use of curfews to terrorise inhabitants. In January a report by the Turkish Human Rights Foundation stated that 162 civilians (among them 29 adult women, 32 children and 24 people over the age 60) have been killed in the districts in South East Turkey where curfews have been declared. These deaths also included trade union members.

Conference notes that peace negotiations between Kurdish leader Abdullah Ocalan, Kurdish politicians and Turkish government officials, which had taken place during a 2 year ceasefire by the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), were ended in early 2015 by Turkish President Erdogan and that since then there has been rising violence. This included the bomb attacks on the trade union organised Peace and Democracy demonstration in Ankara in October 2015 where over 100 people died.

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Conference acknowledges the role of the progressive trade unions in Turkey, specifically the confederations of KESK and DISK, in seeking to promote peace, human rights and democracy, without aligning themselves to any political party.

Conference notes the success of the pro-Kurdish and progressive HDP (Peoples' Democracy Party) in securing 13% of the vote in the June election and, despite high levels of intimidation by the state and ISIS, 11% in the November election, on both occasions breaking the 10% of the national vote rule to achieve parliamentary representation. It is noted that 40% of their successful candidates were women and this included the first Ezidi woman and the first openly gay member of the Turkish parliament.

Conference also notes that whilst the Kurdish people in Rojava in Syria have heroically defended themselves and pushed back the barbarians of Daesh/ISIS, with support from PKK and others, and established democratic, secular and gender-equal administrations, the Turkish government allowed Daesh fighters, supplies and stolen oil to cross their borders and refused to do anything to stop the siege of Kobane.

In North Iraq it has been Kurdish Peshmerga with support from PKK fighters who recently pushed Daesh out of Sinjar rescuing hundreds of Ezidi women whilst the Turkish government have bombed PKK bases, killing civilians.

Conference recognises that:

- 1) Peace and security in Turkey requires negotiations between the government and representatives of the Kurdish people to be re-started and that this should include Ocalan as a key recognised Kurdish leader;
- 2) The Turkish state has used violence and intimidation against their opponents including trade unions, journalists, academics, as well as Kurds and other political opponents;
- 3) The Turkish government has been complicit in the rise of Daesh and failed to prevent supplies, arms and money reaching them and have contributed to the disaster of the Syrian conflicts.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- i) Support the development of links with trade unions, women and youth groups in Turkey including the Kurdish movement and offer support in their efforts to build peace;
- ii) Call for an end to violence on all sides to create the opportunity for genuine and meaningful peace negotiations;
- iii) Call for the release of Abdullah Ocalan from prison to enable him to participate fully in peace negotiations;
- iv) Support the efforts to rebuild Kobane and support the struggle against Daesh;
- v) Write to the Turkish government calling on them to put a stop to the curfews and violence and to re-start peace negotiations with Kurdish leaders.

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South Lanarkshire

81. Saudi Arabia

In 2015 Saudi Arabia carried out 158 executions. Among this number were many human rights advocates, including minors guilty of no more than attending demonstrations.

These executions (which violate international law) continue, for example, Ashiraf Fayadh a Saudi poet faces execution for apostasy.

As well as those executed many more are imprisoned for lengthy periods, Saudi Arabia continues to ban independent human rights associations and imprison its founding members.

All public gatherings, including peaceful demonstrations have been banned since 2011.

“More and more” according to Amnesty International “human rights defenders are being sentenced to years in prison under Saudi Arabia's 2014 counter-terror law”.

Among these are:

- 1) Raif Badawi imprisoned for 10 years and sentenced to 1000 lashes for the advocating of human rights on a blog;
- 2) His lawyer and his sister Samar are both prominent human rights activists, who have campaigned for his release.

Amnesty adds “its allies shamelessly back the kingdoms repression in the name of so called ‘war on terror’”.

The British Governments ‘shameless backing’ can be summed up in their nomination of Saudi Arabia to the UN Human Rights Commission.

In the five years up to 2015 the British Government allowed the sale of £4 billion worth of ‘crowd control’ equipment tear gas, rubber bullets etc. to the Saudi Government.

Between July – Sept last year the government also allowed the sale of £4 billion worth of bombs.

Conference condemns the Human Rights record of Saudi Arabia and believes that all arms sales to Saudi Arabia should cease.

Conference agrees to:

- a) Through Labour Link raise the issue of arms sales to Saudi with the Labour Party and seek a commitment that a future Labour government will cease arms and crowd control gear sales;
- b) Express support for Campaigns in support of Saudi Human Rights activists such as Raif Badawi;

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c) Write to branches and encourage them to affiliate and support Amnesty UK.

Wolverhampton General

82. Don't Silence the Occupation of Palestine

Conference is concerned at the introduction of new laws in Britain, the US and Israel, intended to silence those who campaign for the rights of the Palestinian people.

In October 2015 the Conservative government announced they would introduce new rules "to stop politically-motivated boycott and divestment campaigns by town halls against UK defence companies and against Israel." The proposed rules will restrict the ability of local authorities to consider the risks of making pension investments in or procuring services from companies which are involved in the illegal occupation of Palestine.

In June 2015 the US government approved the "Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act" which sets out their principles for negotiating the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). The act includes provisions to actively discourage actions to boycott, divest from, or sanction Israel and businesses in Israel or the occupied territories. This is a deliberate attempt to use TTIP negotiations to undermine international law and existing European Union measures on trade with the occupied territories.

The Israeli government is supporting a proposed new law prohibiting activists in the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement (BDS) from entering the country. They are also supporting a proposed law, seen as primarily targeting groups which campaign against the occupation, requiring organisations to provide details of the countries funding their activities in any communication with elected officials, and requiring employees to wear special tags when working in Israel's parliament.

These new laws seek to undermine the growing success of the BDS movement and prevent or restrict divestment from companies that are involved in the illegal occupation. They attempt to delegitimise international law and several UN conventions, which confirm that the occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem is illegal.

The Israeli government has continued its programme of rapid settlement expansion in the West Bank, denying increasing numbers of Palestinians access to their land, and undermining prospects of a two state solution. Settler violence towards the Palestinian population has also increased dramatically, with limited, if any, sanctions for the perpetrators.

Conference believes that Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaigns are a legitimate and practical way to persuade the Israeli government to end its repression of the Palestinian people, and contribute towards the building of peace. The BDS Movement is a response to the calls of the Palestinian people for end to repression and the right to self determination. It is a rapidly growing movement which has been highly successful in persuading companies to end their involvement with the illegal occupation.

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As the BDS movement has grown, so has the campaign against it. Many local authorities and others have been threatened with legal action, seeking to reverse democratic decisions on ethical investments regarding Israel and the illegal occupation of Palestine. The Palestine Solidarity Campaign in particular has faced increasing attempts to delegitimise its work.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign for the repeal of restrictive laws which seek to silence those who campaign for Palestinian rights;
- 2) Continue to campaign for an end to the illegal occupation of East Jerusalem and the West Bank and the blockade of Gaza;
- 3) Defend the right of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign to support the rights of the Palestinian people without intimidation or harassment;
- 4) To encourage all UNISON branches to affiliate to the Palestine Solidarity Campaign;
- 5) Pursue the policies and strategy already decided upon at last year's National Delegate Conference, with particular reference to positive BDS campaigning, and in supporting the continued struggle to secure the Rights and Aspirations of the Palestinian People.

Halton

83. Oppose the ongoing repression of the Palestinian People

Conference notes with alarm the escalation of violence in autumn 2015 and notes that tensions have risen in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and within Israel itself.

Conference condemns the attacks by right wing settlers in the Occupied Territories that have open or tacit backing from Netanyahu and his pro Occupation and pro Settler regime. The tension is increased by the collective punishment of the Palestinians, the arbitrary arrests and jailing without trial.

The situation for Palestinians within Israel is also bleak with increased racism. The government has also continued its repression and forced relocation of the Bedouin people in the Negev region.

Furthermore Conference condemns attacks such as those on the Eritrean worker in Beersheba who was killed in a bus station on the basis of the colour of his skin, and Conference condemns attacks on all other civilians, whether Palestinian or Israeli.

Conference condemns the ongoing Occupation and repression against Palestinians. We also condemn and call for the end of the siege of Gaza which is maintained by both Israel and the Egyptian government.

The actions of the Netanyahu government, which has open homophobes in the Cabinet has given a green light to far right groups and individuals; for example the brutal killing of a 16 year old LGBT female activist at the Jerusalem Pride march.

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There has also been a crackdown and vilification of peace groups such as Breaking the Silence, an organisation of Israeli former soldiers that documented the criminal actions of the Israeli Defence Force during its previous invasions of Gaza and its ongoing occupation of the West Bank. Young Israeli conscripts who refuse to serve in the Occupied Territories are jailed.

These few examples show that the claims from supporters of the government that Israel is a beacon of democratic rights are false.

Conference recognises that despite huge spending on arms and the military Occupation, a recent report showed that Israel is in fourth place for income disparity out of the 34 (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) OECD countries.

In recent months the government has attempted to privatise the natural gas resources which have seen massive protests across Israel.

The economic situation and the increased tensions with attacks on Israeli citizens including in Tel Aviv show that the government cannot provide peace and security for its people. The continuation of the Occupation does not provide safety for the Jewish population in Israel.

Conference extends its solidarity to all those working to end the Occupation. We salute the protests that took place inside Israel during the autumn of 2015 who marched with slogans such as 'Down with the government of capital and the settlers' 'End the Occupation' and 'Arabs and Jews – refuse to be enemies'.

UNISON salute the care workers who have taken strike action, who marched with banners in Hebrew and Arabic to gain support for their demands.

UNISON also looks to the social justice movement of 2011 when hundreds of thousands of Israelis took to the streets in tent cities to protest against the rising cost of living and the growing gap between rich and poor.

The workers' disputes that regularly take place in Israel indicate the underlying class friction that exists. And whereas there is not yet a movement of substantial size against the Occupation, there are cracks at the top of the Israeli regime regarding the future of it and the government's use of heavy repression.

Conference believes that neither the major international institutions such as the EU and UN, nor the regimes around the Middle East will solve the crisis for the Palestinians. They support the liberation of the Palestinian masses in words only and propose no solution. The current leadership of the Palestinians unfortunately offer no future for the Palestinian people. Instead any lasting solution must be based on working class people, both in Israel and Palestine as well as neighbouring states, coordinating in common mass struggles against imperialism and capitalism internationally and locally, and for a Socialist confederation in the region.

Conference resolves to continue our solidarity with the Palestinian struggle and calls on the National Executive Council to.

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- 1) Ensure branches continue to be updated from the solidarity campaigns that the union is affiliated to;
- 2) Publicise and support workers' struggles from within Israel and Palestine to help give confidence and solidarity to those campaigning against the Occupation and in defence of workers' and democratic right;
- 3) Support trade union protest in the UK against the Occupation and in solidarity with the Palestinian population;
- 4) Encourage discussion and debate on how trade unionists in the UK can best provide solidarity to the Palestinians;
- 5) Look at the feasibility of facilitating speaking tours of activists from the region to raise publicity for our solidarity work;
- 6) Encourage branches and activists to join up with protests in their areas against the Occupation and in event of further escalations and war.

*Coventry City
Nottingham City*

84. Peace Must Bring Social and Economic Justice in Colombia

Conference notes that the peace talks between the government of Colombian and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) which began in 2012 are likely to be concluded in 2016.

Conference joins with the Colombian trade union movement and civil society in supporting the peace process. However, like them we share the concern that lasting peace can only be achieved through policies aimed at achieving real social and economic justice.

Conference notes that Colombia has the highest level of social inequality in the Andean region and a third of Colombians live in poverty. Colombia is the third most unequal country in Latin America and tenth in the world. Afro-Colombians are far likelier than other Colombian workers to earn less than the minimum wage and comprise more than 50 percent of the country's poor, although they are a quarter of Colombia's population. Poverty is higher amongst rural Colombians who also make up many of the 4.5 million internally displaced people.

Conference further notes that despite the peace talks, human rights abuses are rife in Colombia with human rights defenders, trade unionists, Afro-Colombians and indigenous people being the main victims. Conference notes that 17 trade unionists were murdered in Colombia in 2015. Of the more than 3,000 trade unionists killed over the past 20 years, 98% of cases had not been investigated by the Colombian authorities nor have the perpetrators been brought to justice. Human rights lawyers CCAJAR, thanks to funding from UNISON's International Development Fund (UIDF), have successfully brought several cases proving the complicity between employers and paramilitaries in the assassination of trade union leaders but much more needs to be done. The peace agreement must address this issue as well as collective

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reparations for the families of murdered trade unionists and communities that have been victims of the violence.

Conference expresses its concern that Colombia has over 5,000 political prisoners including many trade unionists. When a UNISON delegation visited the FENSUAGRO agricultural workers union leader Huber Ballesteros in La Picota prison in December 2015 he had been held for 28 months without trial. His case is not unusual. The peace agreement must lead to an amnesty and compensation for political prisoners.

Conference recognises the excellent work done by Justice for Colombia in raising these issues within the British and Irish trade union movements and with politicians and political parties. Justice for Colombia was set up by the TUC and its affiliates and is dependent upon funding from the trade union movement.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to provide support to the Colombian trade union movement and human rights organisations through the UIDF;
- 2) Develop further links with the ANTHOC the national trade union representing workers in the health sector;
- 3) Campaign with Justice for Colombia and Colombian civil society for any peace agreement to be accompanied by meaningful policy measures addressing social and economic injustice;
- 4) Lobby the UK and European Union to provide international development support for these measures;
- 5) Put pressure on the Colombian authorities to end the culture of impunity with regard to the assassination of trade unionists and human rights defenders and to provide effective protection to all individuals at risk;
- 6) Campaign for the release of all political prisoners;
- 7) Encourage regions and branches to affiliate and make donations to Justice for Colombia.

Scotland Region

85. Justice for Colombia

Conference notes that the peace talks between the government of Colombian and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) which began in 2012 are likely to be concluded in 2016.

We join with the Colombian trade union movement and civil society in supporting the peace process. However, like them we share the concern that lasting peace can only be achieved through policies aimed at achieving real social and economic justice.

Conference notes that Colombia has some of the highest levels of social inequality in South America and a third of Colombians live in poverty. Colombia is the third most

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unequal country in Latin America and tenth in the world. Afro-Colombians are far likelier than other Colombian workers to earn less than the minimum wage and comprise more than 50 percent of the country's poor, although they are a quarter of Colombia's population. Poverty is higher amongst rural Colombians who also make up many of the 4.5 million internally displaced people.

Conference further notes that despite the peace talks, human rights abuses are rife in Colombia with human rights defenders, trade unionists, Afro-Colombians and indigenous people being the main victims.

Seventeen trade unionists were murdered in Colombia in 2015. Of the more than 3,000 trade unionists killed over the past 20 years, 98% of cases had not been investigated by Colombian authorities nor have the perpetrators been brought to justice. Human rights lawyers CCAJAR, thanks to funding from UNISON's International Development Fund (UIDF), have successfully brought several cases proving the complicity between employers and paramilitaries in the assassination of trade union leaders but much more needs to be done. The peace agreement must address this issue as well as collective reparations for the families of murdered trade unionists and communities that have been victims of the violence.

Conference expresses its concern that Colombia has over 5,000 political prisoners including many trade unionists. When a UNISON delegation visited the FENSUAGRO agricultural workers union leader Huber Ballesteros in La Picota prison in December 2015, he had been held for 28 months without trial. His case is not unusual. The peace agreement must lead to an amnesty and compensation for political prisoners.

Conference recognises the excellent work done by Justice for Colombia in raising these issues within the British and Irish trade union movements and with politicians and political parties. Justice for Colombia was set up by the TUC and its affiliates and is dependent upon funding from the trade union movement.

Conference calls for the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to provide support to the Colombian trade union movement and human rights organisations through the UIDF;
- 2) Campaign with Justice for Colombia and Colombian civil society for any peace agreement to be accompanied by meaningful policy measures addressing social and economic injustice;
- 3) Lobby the UK and European Union to provide international development support for these measures;
- 4) Put pressure on the Colombian authorities to end the culture of impunity with regard to the assassination of trade unionists and human rights defenders and to provide effective protection to all individuals at risk;
- 5) Campaign for the release of all political prisoners;
- 6) Encourage further branches to affiliate and make donations to Justice for Colombia.

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West Midlands Region

86. Peace Must Bring Social and Economic Justice to Colombia

Conference notes that the peace talks between the government of Colombian and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) which began in 2012 are likely to be concluded in 2016.

Conference joins with the Colombian trade union movement and civil society in supporting the peace process. However, like them we share the concern that lasting peace can only be achieved through policies aimed at achieving real social and economic justice.

Conference notes that Colombia has the highest level of social inequality in the Andean region and a third of Colombians live in poverty. Colombia is the third most unequal country in Latin America and tenth in the world. Afro-Colombians are far likelier than other Colombian workers to earn less than the minimum wage and comprise more than 50 per cent of the country's poor, although they are a quarter of Colombia's population. Poverty is higher amongst rural Colombians who also make up many of the 4.5 million internally displaced people.

Conference further notes that despite the peace talks human rights abuses are rife in Colombia with human rights defenders, trade unionists, Afro-Colombians and indigenous people being the main victims. Conference notes that 17 trade unionists were murdered in Colombia in 2015. Of the more than 3,000 trade unionists killed over the past 20 years, 98% of cases had not been investigated by the Colombian authorities nor have the perpetrators been brought to justice. Human rights lawyers CCAJAR, thanks to funding from UNISON's International Development Fund (UIDF), have successfully brought several cases proving the complicity between employers and paramilitaries in the assassination of trade union leaders but much more needs to be done. The peace agreement must address this issue as well as collective reparations for the families of murdered trade unionists and communities that have been victims of the violence.

Conference expresses its concern that Colombia has over 5,000 political prisoners including many trade unionists. When a UNISON delegation visited the FENSUAGRO agricultural workers union leader Huber Ballesteros in La Picota prison in December 2015 he had been held for 28 months without trial. His case is not unusual. The peace agreement must lead to an amnesty and compensation for political prisoners.

Conference recognises the excellent work done by Justice for Colombia in raising these issues within the British and Irish trade union movements and with politicians and political parties. Justice for Colombia was set up by the TUC and its affiliates and is dependent upon funding from the trade union movement.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to provide support to the Colombian trade union movement and human rights organisations through the UIDF;

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- 2) Campaign with Justice for Colombia and Colombian civil society for any peace agreement to be accompanied by meaningful policy measures addressing social and economic injustice;
- 3) Lobby the UK and European Union to provide international development support for these measures;
- 4) Put pressure on the Colombian authorities to end the culture of impunity with regard to the assassination of trade unionists and human rights defenders and to provide effective protection to all individuals at risk;
- 5) Campaign for the release of all political prisoners;
- 6) Encourage regions and branches to affiliate and make donations to Justice for Colombia.

Wolverhampton General

87. Colombia

Conference recognises the importance of UNISON's continued support for the campaign for peace and economic and social justice in Colombia. The ongoing peace talks between the government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) are likely to be concluded this year.

Conference joins with the Colombian trade union movement and civil society in supporting the peace process. However, like them we share the concern that lasting peace can only be achieved through policies aimed at achieving real social and economic justice.

Conference notes that this year also marks the fifteenth anniversary of 'Plan Colombia', the United States' multi-billion dollar military and police assistance package to Colombia. The Plan, initiated at a time when the Colombian government and FARC guerrillas were in peace talks, has been widely criticised for derailing those talks, setting back the peace process and escalating violence in the country. US military aid is part and parcel of an unjust economic strategy to further open up Colombia to multinational corporations, exploiting Colombian workers and the environment.

Conference notes that despite the current peace talks and the prospects for their conclusion this year, human rights abuses continue in Colombia with 17 trade unionists being murdered in 2015. Of the more than 3,000 trade unionists killed over the past 20 years, 98% of cases had not been investigated by the Colombian authorities nor have the perpetrators been brought to justice.

Conference expresses its concern that Colombia has over 5,000 political prisoners including many trade unionists. When a UNISON delegation visited the FENSUAGRO agricultural workers union leader Huber Ballesteros in La Picota prison in December 2015 he had been held for 28 months without trial. His case is not unusual. The peace agreement must lead to an amnesty and compensation for political prisoners.

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Conference recognises the excellent work done by Justice for Colombia in raising these issues within the British and Irish trade union movements and with politicians and political parties. Justice for Colombia was set up by the TUC and its affiliates and is dependent upon funding from the trade union movement.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to support the work of Justice for Colombia and to encourage regions and branches to affiliate and make donations;
- 2) Continue to work with Justice for Colombia and Colombian trade unionists for any peace agreement to be accompanied by meaningful policy measures addressing social and economic injustice;
- 3) Lobby the UK government and European Union to provide international development support for these measures;
- 4) Put pressure on the Colombian authorities to end the culture of impunity with regard to the assassination of trade unionists and human rights defenders and to provide effective protection to all individuals at risk;
- 5) Campaign for the release of all political prisoners.

Manchester

88. Support for a Progressive Nicaragua

Conference applauds the progress made by the FSLN government towards social and economic justice in Nicaragua since being elected in 2007. After 17 years of austerity and privatisation policies imposed by successive right wing governments, Nicaragua is undergoing a remarkable transformation. Although the legacy of the past means that Nicaragua remains the second poorest country in the Americas after Haiti, social programmes introduced by the FSLN government have led to considerable progress being made in terms of achieving the 2015 United Nations Millennium Development Goals for poverty reduction.

Nicaragua is recognised as a leading Latin American country in reducing infant and maternal mortality and malnutrition. Malnutrition has been reduced by more than 50% and Nicaragua is one of only 38 countries in the world which has achieved the UN MDG against hunger. Maternal mortality is now less than half of what it was at the beginning of the century and illiteracy has been virtually eliminated. Education and basic health care are now free and the government has introduced an affordable housing programme and solidarity bonuses for low paid workers. Social programmes aimed in particular at low paid and vulnerable women also contribute to poverty reduction in the country.

Ranked 12th out of 145 countries, Nicaragua remains the best performer in the region for the fourth consecutive year according to the World Economic Forum's 2015 Gender Gap report (the UK's ranking is 18). Amendments to the Nicaraguan constitution passed in 2014 state that women candidates must make up half of each party's slate for all elected posts at national and local level.

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Trade unions, which struggled to survive during the neo-liberal years, have seen their rights restored since 2007, but remain poor in terms of resources. Conference therefore welcomes the support given by UNISON's International Development Fund to UNISON's sister unions UNE and FETSALUD. The projects supported by the Fund have provided much needed training and capacity building for women and young people in particular. This has helped the unions to become a stronger, more effective force in the country.

In November 2016, national elections will take place in Nicaragua. President Daniel Ortega has an approval rating among the population of some 76%, but Conference notes with concern recent reports alleging that certain US agencies are channelling funds to strengthen anti-FSLN media. Given recent events in Venezuela, Conference believes that steps must be taken to ensure that any attempts by the United States administration or US organisations to intervene in the elections are stopped.

In light of the above, and recognising the pivotal role that the Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign Action Group (NSCAG) has played in maintaining an awareness of Nicaragua's progress amongst trade unions in the UK, Conference hopes that UNISON will continue to work closely with NSCAG and UNISON's counterpart unions in Nicaragua.

Conference further resolves to:

- 1) Encourage branches and regions which have not yet done so, to affiliate to the NSCAG and promote its events and campaigns;
- 2) Work with the NSCAG to campaign against any attempts by the United States administration or US organisations to interfere with or undermine the forthcoming Nicaraguan elections;
- 3) Widely disseminate "good news" stories from Nicaragua to raise awareness of the effectiveness of international solidarity amongst UNISON members.

Suffolk Police Sector

89. Chibok Girls

Conference, as you may recall, in April 2014, the dreaded and infamous terrorist group, Boko Haram, abducted and kidnapped 276 schoolgirls in Chibok village in north-eastern Nigeria. That event triggered a global manifestation of outrage and solidarity – outrage against a brazen act of religious banditry and jihadist zealotry; solidarity for the innocent teenage abductees and their families. The resulting international social-media campaign, #BringBackOur Girls, attracted high profile global support, which continues today.

Conference, the sad reality was not that the Chibok girls were not daughters of wealthy and powerful politicians; it was simply that they were girls—people who society and culture actively conspire to downgrade their social premium and human dignity to that of second class citizens. Unless and until we confront the misguided belief that the girl-child simply does not count in the order of gender priority, the

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impunity of groups like Boko Haram, the Taliban, Al Qaeda and Al-Shabab and their trademark fanaticism will continue.

Conference, the abduction of the Chibok Girls is a consequence of a prior violation of the fundamental human rights of the girl-child, especially her right to education. Statistics on this matter don't lie, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Global Education Digest 2011 stated that "Sub-Saharan Africa records the lowest enrolment ratios of girls and the lowest rate of completion for girls in primary and secondary education compared to boys".

There are underlying factors that militate against the education of the girl-child that we may not simply overlook or ignore. Many societies in sub-Saharan Africa peg the value of a girl-child on the economic return projected to her physiognomy, including the tone or complexion of her skin, and her stature. When educated, as in some parts of the Sub-Sahara Africa, her "market" value is calculated based on her level of schooling.

The frustration of women's dream for education emerges from the same combination of cultural prejudice, social indifference, economic miscalculations, political ineptitude, religious fanaticism and sectarian hatred. Put together they militate against the chances—however little—of the girl-child in quest of education for integral human development and social transformation.

We are familiar with the slogan that the development of a nation is premised on the imperative of educating the girl-child, "educate a girl and educate a nation". Though repeated with regularity, this slogan only seldom translates into reality, because the equation is heavily rigged in her disfavour.

The forces arrayed against the education of the girl-child are legion and formidable. To quote the British prime minister, David Cameron, in the aftermath of the horrific massacre at a school in Peshawar by Pakistani Taliban in December 2014, "it is horrifying that children are simply killed for going to school." The horror of such attacks carries a significant gender quotient, because the odds, risk and toll rise significantly when those school children are girls. Although the perpetrators of terror facily and routinely anchor their brutal assault of the educated girl or woman on religion.

Conference the drivers of destructive gender-based violence run deep in the collective socio-cultural psyche. Truth be told, any society that relegates women to a secondary status and allots them menial tasks, creates propitious conditions for gender-based violence and morally depraved ideologies to emerge and thrive.

There are millions of Chibok Girls whose fate challenges our claims to unrivalled globalization and technological progress in the 21st century. There are millions of Chibok Girls whose singular gifts would forever be lost to humanity because of terrorists who turn schools into abattoirs of civilization. These are the girls we need to bring back, whose voices we may not remain silence too. Out of the 276 Chibok girl's that were taken, approximately 216 were rescued or returned, 212 of them were pregnant.

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As a society, notwithstanding the unparalleled technological advancements of our times, we still remain largely uneducated in the art of honouring the dignity of woman, reverencing her unbowed spirit and upholding her inalienable rights to common social goods. Unless and until we excel in this kind of education our world would remain half-finished, incomplete and violated.

Conference call on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Request that the International Committee write to the Nigerian Government to raise UNISON's concerns and to do all in its power to bring back all the Chibok girls;
- 2) Explore through our International Committee the possibility of writing to the International Crimes Commission about these atrocities and urging them to bring war crimes charges against the perpetrators of such in-human acts;
- 3) Call on UNISON to support girl child education and look to highlight this in all UNISON media as an important humanitarian issues;
- 4) Report back to the 2017 National Delegates Conference and explore the possibility of holding a fringe meeting to ensure the issue of child education and their protection is of paramount importance in UNISON.

Hammersmith and Fulham

90. Chibok Girls

Conference, as you may all recall, in April 2014, the dreaded and infamous terrorist group, Boko Haram, abducted and kidnapped 276 schoolgirls in Chibok village in north-eastern Nigeria. That event triggered a global manifestation of outrage and solidarity—outrage against a brazen act of religious banditry and jihadist zealotry; solidarity for the innocent teenage abductees and their families. The resulting international social-media campaign, #BringBackOurGirls, attracted high-profile global support, which continues today.

Conference, the sad reality was not that the Chibok girls were not daughters of wealthy and powerful politicians; it was simply that they were girls—people who society and culture actively conspire to downgrade their social premium and human dignity to that of second class citizens. Unless and until we confront the misguided belief that the girl-child simply does not count in the order of gender priority, the impunity of groups like Boko Haram, the Taliban, Al Qaeda and Al-Shabab and their trademark fanaticism will continue.

Conference, the abduction of the Chibok Girls is a consequence of a prior violation of the fundamental human rights of the girl-child, especially her right to education. Statistics on this matter don't lie, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Global Education Digest 2011 stated that "Sub-Saharan Africa records the lowest enrolment ratios of girls and the lowest rate of completion for girls in primary and secondary education compared to boys".

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value of a girl-child on the economic return projected to her physiognomy, including the tone or complexion of her skin, and her stature. When educated, as in some parts of the Sub-Sahara Africa, her “market” value is calculated based on her level of schooling.

The frustration of women’s dream for education emerges from the same combination of cultural prejudice, social indifference, economic miscalculations, political ineptitude, religious fanaticism and sectarian hatred. Put together they militate against the chances—however little—of the girl-child in quest of education for integral human development and social transformation.

We are familiar with the slogan that the development of a nation is premised on the imperative of educating the girl-child, “educate a girl and educate a nation”. Though repeated with regularity, this slogan only seldom translates into reality, because the equation is heavily rigged in her disfavour.

The forces arrayed against the education of the girl-child are legion and formidable. To quote the British prime minister, David Cameron, in the aftermath of the horrific massacre at a school in Peshawar by Pakistani Taliban in December 2014, “it is horrifying that children are simply killed for going to school.” The horror of such attacks carries a significant gender quotient, because the odds, risk and toll rise significantly when those school children are girls. Although the perpetrators of terror facily and routinely anchor their brutal assault of the educated girl or woman on religion.

Conference the drivers of destructive gender-based violence run deep in the collective socio-cultural psyche. Truth be told, any society that relegates women to a secondary status and allots them menial tasks, creates propitious conditions for gender-based violence and morally depraved ideologies to emerge and thrive.

There are millions of Chibok Girls whose fate challenges our claims to unrivalled globalization and technological progress in the 21st century. There are millions of Chibok Girls whose singular gifts would forever be lost to humanity because of terrorists who turn schools into abattoirs of civilization. These are the girls we need to bring back, whose voices we may not remain silence too.

As a society, notwithstanding the unparalleled technological advancements of our times, we still remain largely uneducated in the art of honouring the dignity of woman, reverencing her unbowed spirit and upholding her inalienable rights to common social goods. Unless and until we excel in this kind of education our world would remain half-finished, incomplete and violated.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Request that the International Committee write to the Nigerian government to raise our concerns and to do all in its power to bring back all the Chibok girls;
- 2) Explore through our National Executive Council Black Members Representatives the possibility of UNISON writing to the International Crimes Commission about these atrocities and urging them to bring war crimes charges again the perpetrators of such an in-human act;

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- 3) Call on UNISON to support girl child education and look to highlight this in all UNISON media as an important humanitarian issue;
- 4) Report back to the 2017 National Delegates Conference and explore the possibility of holding a fringe meeting to ensure the issue of child education is of paramount importance to our members.

Housing Associations

91. Remembering Srebrenica and the Genocide of Thousands

In July 1995 8,372 men and boys were massacred by Bosnian Serb forces. They are more than a statistic; they are fathers, husbands, sons and loved ones of those who were left behind. Bosnia was a horrific reminder of the vulnerability of ordinary people. It questions how this could happen on our doorstep when the world had pledged 'never again' after World War Two. If the xenophobic claims of ethnic superiority could prevail amongst white indigenous people who are assimilated and have lived together for hundreds of years, what chance do ethnic minority communities have in Europe?

Srebrenica Memorial Day – 11 July.

On Srebrenica Memorial Day, we honour the victims and survivors of the genocide and pledge to commit ourselves to creating a cohesive society for everyone. The aim is to encourage everyone in our society to learn about the consequences of hate and discrimination. There is no doubt that in Britain we have come a long way on race relations and achieved a lot. However, we must recognise that there is a lot to do. Racism, discrimination and the promotion of hatred, continues to persist. The Srebrenica Memorial Day therefore is important not just as an act of remembrance but as a lesson for generations to come.

"I want to speak to people and share my story because my heart speaks. And now, finally, someone is listening." Hassan Hasanovic, Death March Survivor.

UNISON has been at the forefront in the fight against racism and has been successful in campaigns against far right groups. What we must do is remember why we fight against fascism, and work to ensure genocide in Europe, in recent times is not forgotten.

This motion calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Put into UNISON's calendar the 'Remembering Srebrenica Day' as recognised by the European Parliament;
- 2) Produce material for branches to promote the annual remembrance day;
- 3) Promote events commemorating this day;
- 4) Establish links with the organisation – 'Remembering Srebrenica'.

United Utilities

Europe

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92. Building the Campaign against European Union Trade and Investment Agreements

Conference notes that negotiations are continuing on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and the Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA) whilst ratification process of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) is likely to start this year.

Conference further notes that the European Commission has tabled a revised version of the much criticised Investor State Dispute Settlement Mechanism (ISDS) in TTIP to try and weaken public opposition. Conference believes that the new Investment Court proposals will still mean that multi-national corporations will be able to use a private court system to sue governments who pass policies that they feel will impact on their abilities to maximise their profits. Conference therefore opposes the new proposals and resolves to campaign against them.

Conference also notes that the EU has been negotiating the Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA) with 23 other World Trade Organization members since 2013 with the aim of further liberalising trade in services by the means of reaching an international agreement that goes far beyond the existing provisions of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS).

Conference condemns the fact that as with TTIP these negotiations are conducted in total secrecy. However, in June and July 2015, Wikileaks published the most comprehensive compendium of secret documents from the TiSA negotiations ever, revealing the full extent of the planned agreement for the first time.

These make it apparent that TiSA might have significant detrimental implications on the working and living conditions of European workers.

They also show that the so-called 'ratchet and standstill' clauses are to be incorporated into TiSA with the effect of locking-in liberalisation and preventing the bringing back in-house of services.

TiSA also includes a so-called Most-favoured-nation (MFN) clause which could mean the investor-state-dispute-settlement (ISDS) mechanism applies to TiSA via the back door of other free trade agreements such as CETA or TTIP.

TiSA also contains necessity test for new regulations so that they are "no more burdensome than necessary". The objective here is to restrict a government's room for manoeuvre as far as regulations are concerned, thus potentially putting a downward pressure on labour, social, environmental and consumer standards.

Conference notes that negotiations on the EU-Canada Agreement, CETA, have concluded and the ratification process is due to begin in 2016. Conference further notes, that the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) are opposed to CETA ratification. Conference therefore resolves to step-up the campaign of awareness-raising around CETA and further resolves to call on Members of the European Parliament and Westminster MPs to oppose CETA.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

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- 1) Continue to inform UNISON members and the general public about the dangers of TTIP, TiSA and CETA;
- 2) Oppose the new Investment Court system which still maintains a system of privileged private courts for multi-national corporations;
- 3) Specifically campaign and work with EPSU, PSI and sister unions in the USA, Canada and TiSA countries in exposing the consequences of these agreements on public services;
- 4) Mount a major campaign calling on MEPs and MPs to oppose the ratification of CETA.

National Executive Council

93. Protecting Labour, Social, Environmental and Consumer standards in EU International Trade Agreements

Conference notes that the three European Union global trade agreements, the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and the Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA) will have a huge impact on future global trade and investment rules, covering 53 countries, over 75% of the EU economy, 80% of the US economy and the majority of the global economy accounting for two thirds of global GDP.

Conference further notes that public services have been included in all three agreements despite an unprecedented European and US public and trade union campaign to demand that public services are removed or 'carved out' from the treaty.

Conference believes that it is a top priority for UNISON to continue to campaign against public services being included in these treaties. All public services should be exempted and protected from every single chapter provision in the Treaties. These new international trade treaties will harm existing EU and UK labour, social, environmental and consumer standards and regulations.

The treaties must not only require countries to respect the fundamental human rights set out in the eight core conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) but these rights must be binding and enforceable and not just rest on a weak framework of mutual compliance.

Conference notes that currently there is no enforcement mechanism agreed in the text if a corporation or country does not observe or breaches ILO conventions. Without an enforcement mechanism in place, companies will be able to infringe ILO conventions without fear of enforcement or disqualification from overseas investment. Global companies seeking to maximise profits may be encouraged to locate or secure public procurement contracts to countries with weaker labour and social rights enforcement creating global 'social dumping'.

In the TTIP draft agreement threats to the environment include proposals for the removal of 'trade barriers'. The barriers identified include: green or sustainable public procurement, energy efficiency labels, fuel efficiency standards for cars, regulation of unconventional fossil fuel extraction including shale gas (fracking) and tar sands

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sustainability standards for bio energy and the banning of gases in appliances such as refrigerators and freezers.

Fundamental EU health and safety chemical practices such as Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) and the Precautionary Principle, which aims to protect public health and the environment when there is scientific uncertainty, are both at risk.

CETA will likely allow global corporations to ignore or challenge environmental regulations and targets to cut emissions because again there is no enforcement mechanism. "Parties" are encouraged to engage in further discussions and identify appropriate measures to decide upon a "mutually satisfactory action plan" in the event of a dispute.

The treaties will also impede a government's ability to make new and better standards. This will drive down standards and de-regulate environmental and health and safety standards. TISA for example says that any new regulation must meet a necessity test so that they are "no more burdensome than necessary".

Conference believes for consumers there are also real threats to the health and safety standards governing the farming and production of food involving regulation of chemically washed poultry, livestock treated with growth hormones, genetically modified seeds and fertilizers. Farmers are seeking to roll back regulations that hinder their scope for profits at the expense of food safety, local and organic farmers and animal welfare.

CETA is more likely to encourage global trade deals of increased agribusiness. The treaty will give biotech, pharmaceutical, pesticide, seed, and grain companies more rights to force farmers to buy gene patented seeds at high prices. It will almost entirely also eliminate the rights of farmers to save, re-use and sell seeds. Corporations could even seize farmers' crops, equipment, and farms, and freeze their bank accounts if they are found with crops from patented seeds that they did not pay royalties on.

TTIP calls for the harmonisation of regulatory standards and proposes a Regulatory Cooperation Council (RCC) to oversee regulatory 'coherence'. This will lead to the lowering of standards rather than raising standards up. Any proposed regulations, as well as being debated and discussed within a state's own democratic structures, would have to go to the interested 'parties' first and then the RCC.

Conference further believes that the RCC currently described as "manned by senior level representatives from regulators and trade representatives at the EU Commission's Secretariat General (SG) and the US Office for Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) who shall meet twice a year, organise the work and prepare a yearly regulatory programme." is both undemocratic and unrepresentative.

Any 'regulatory co-operation' should respect the principles of transparency and democratic scrutiny and allow equal engagement of all stakeholders. Regulatory co-operation should not lead to any lowering or downward harmonisation of existing

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regulations and should not undermine the fundamental right of governments to regulate in the public interest.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) To campaign for all public services, including all public environmental services such as the Environment Agency, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Department of Energy and Climate Change and the Forestry Commission to be removed from all three trade agreements;
- 2) To campaign to make ILO conventions enforceable on all treaty 'parties' and make the case for strong social provisions in all the treaties to prevent global 'social dumping';
- 3) To continue to campaign to remove the role of the Regulatory Co-operation Council in TTIP and any similar regulatory governance structures in other treaties which seek to lower standards and drive deregulation in the name of 'harmonisation' or 'coherence';
- 4) To continue to campaign to remove the TISA proposal for new regulations to meet a necessity test so that they are "no more burdensome than necessary";
- 5) To continue to campaign for the abolition and public service protections against the use of ISDS or ICS challenges to domestic environmental laws in CETA/TTIP/TISA;
- 6) To continue to specifically campaign and work with environmental, health and safety and global justice alliances, European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU), Public Services International (PSI) and sister unions in the USA, Canada and TISA countries in exposing the consequences of these agreements on public services and Labour, Social, Environmental and Consumer standards and regulations;
- 7) To mount a major campaign calling on MEPs and MPs to oppose the ratification of CETA, TTIP and TISA.

East Midlands Region

94. Support an In Vote in the EU Referendum

Conference notes that there will be a referendum on the United Kingdom's continued membership of the European Union before the end of 2017.

Conference recognises that many members of UNISON are sceptical about the benefits of EU membership.

EU's advocacy of TTIP and similar agreements designed to advance the interests of transnational capital across Europe, at the expense of workers, opening up public services to marketisation has weakened trust in the EU's democratic structures.

Furthermore the position adopted by the EU on the crisis in Greece, and its support for austerity measures across Europe has done much to undermine support for the EU amongst UNISON members.

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Conference understands these concerns but it also recognises the benefits and protection that EU membership has delivered for working people in the UK.

UNISON should not mistake the temporary electoral ascendancy by the neo-liberal right across the EU, and the policies that they have pursued, for an inherent failure of the EU as an institution. Instead the pursuit of austerity economics demands a more compelling case be made for a progressive, social Europe.

In the past that social Europe has delivered genuine improvements for our members; this has included rights for women, part-time, temporary and agency workers, rights in situations of redundancy and information and consultation, rights for working parents and a range of health and safety rights, including limitations on excessive hours and the creation of a work-life balance. These rights should be both promoted and strengthened.

Broader benefits have included a contribution to peace and stability in Europe over the past 70 years, promotion of human rights, action to address climate change, and the widening of democracy into the former Eastern Bloc states. The value to the UK of trade with the EU is estimated at £227 billion each year.

Against these benefits we have the spectre of an 'Out' vote in the EU referendum and the consequences that would result; a diminished UK locked out of the EU, potentially without a newly independent Scotland, and ruled by a Conservative government that is intent on damaging, partisan reforms to the British parliamentary electoral system that will further embed their majority.

That the Conservative government is also intent on abolishing the Human Rights Act, replacing it with a weaker Bill of Rights, and has proposed withdrawing from the European Convention on Human Rights. They have already attacked the trade union movement through the Lobbying Act, and are conducting further damaging attacks through the Trade Union Bill.

A UK on these bleak terms would be disastrous for this union and our members.

However, valid concerns may be regards the EU it remains a bulwark against the threat of a radical right-wing national government determined to reduce worker's rights, end freedom of expression, limit freedom of association and silence the voices of millions of union members.

Given these threats UNISON cannot stand aside.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to campaign to retain the UK's membership of the EU in the referendum.

Furthermore Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign with the TUC and our sister unions in Europe in support of EU reform for a Social Europe that delivers economic prosperity based on social justice, civil and human rights, equality for all and rights at work;
- 2) Promote EU reforms that would increase investment for sustainable growth, and in public infrastructure and energy efficiency;

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- 3) Continue to oppose TTIP in its entirety or according to our policy as set by Conference;
- 4) Campaign for an alternative economic vision within the EU, based on growth and investment and oppose moves towards neoliberalism and permanent austerity in member states.

South West Region

95. Support an 'In' vote in the European Union Referendum

Conference notes that there will be a referendum on the United Kingdom's continued membership of the European Union before the end of 2017.

Conference recognises that many members of UNISON are sceptical about the benefits of EU membership.

EU's advocacy of TTIP and similar agreements designed to advance the interests of transnational capital across Europe, at the expense of workers, and opening up public services to marketization has weakened trust in the EU's democratic structures.

Furthermore the position adopted by the EU on the crisis in Greece and its support for austerity measures across Europe has done much to undermine support for the EU amongst UNISON members.

Conference understands these concerns but it also recognises the benefits and protection that EU membership has delivered for working people in the UK.

UNISON should not mistake the temporary electoral ascendancy by the neoliberal Right across the EU and the policies that they have pursued for an inherent failure of the EU as an institution. Instead the pursuit of austerity economics, and the political agenda this enables, demands a more compelling case be made for an alternative progressive, social Europe.

In the past that social Europe has delivered genuine improvements for our members; this has included rights for women, part-time, temporary and agency workers, rights in situations of redundancy and information and consultation, rights for working parents and a range of health and safety rights, including limitations on excessive hours and the creation of a work-life balance. These rights should be both promoted and strengthened.

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A future United Kingdom on these bleak terms would be disastrous for this union and for our members.

However valid concerns may be regards the EU it remains a bulwark against the threat of a radical right-wing national government determined to reduce worker's rights, end freedom of expression, limit freedom of association and silence the voices of millions of union members.

Given these threats UNISON cannot stand aside.

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- 2) Promote EU reforms that would increase investment for sustainable growth, and in public infrastructure and energy efficiency;
- 3) Continue to oppose TTIP in its entirety or according to our policy as set by Conference;
- 4) Campaign for an alternative economic vision within the EU, based on growth and investment and oppose moves towards neoliberalism and permanent austerity in member states.

Somerset County

96. Europe

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 planned referendum on withdrawal from the 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.

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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;
- 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

97. Oppose Exit from the EU – Fight For A Workers' Europe

Conference notes that:

- 1) UK withdrawal from the European Union in the upcoming referendum would be a victory for the nationalist right and their vile, racist campaign against migrants, including members - and potential members - of our union;
- 2) While the EU promotes privatisation and neoliberalism, the current UK government would press ahead with its attacks on working-class people in or out of the EU, and if the UK leaves the EU, the UK government will step up attacks;

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- 3) The biggest “In” campaign, Britain Stronger in Europe, is dominated by Tories and business people and cannot possibly act as a voice for working-class interests, workers' unity across Europe or migrants' rights. Cameron wants to remain in the EU on the basis of cutting back workers' rights and attacking migrants, and Britain Stronger in Europe actually trumpets this!
- 4) We should respond to the EU by building stronger working-class and socialist links across the continent, organising a united struggle, and pushing forward towards a united Workers' Europe – not by seeking to re-raise national barriers.

Conference further notes that the campaign Another Europe is Possible (AEIP) has been set up to organise an anti-austerity, internationalist opposition to withdrawal from the EU; while the Workers' Europe initiative, which supports AEIP, is developing a specifically working-class and labour movement focus in campaigning. The Labour Party has also launched its own campaign.

Conference resolves to:

- a) Campaign for the UK to stay in the EU;
- b) Campaign for an end to austerity, and the levelling up of wages, conditions, services, and rights across Europe; for the scrapping of bureaucratic EU structures and for a sovereign, democratic European Parliament; and for freedom of movement and an end to “Fortress Europe”;
- c) Support and participate in the Another Europe is Possible campaign, and promote its materials and initiatives, as well as those of Workers' Europe;
- d) Engage in the Labour Party “in” campaign through Labour Link, calling for it to campaign on a pro-working class anti-austerity, internationalist basis, not on the basis of what is “good for business”, terrorism and “getting a seat at the top table”;
- e) Put migrants' rights at the forefront of our campaigning around the referendum – fighting for migrants' rights in Britain, defending the right of workers from EU countries to come here, and demanding the opening of Europe's doors to refugees and migrants from outside;
- f) Advertise the support and advice UNISON offers to migrant workers;
- g) Support migrant workers in UNISON in building self-organisation, against nationalist attacks.

Lambeth

98. Reject Austerity, Save Our Public Services – Vote Leave

Conference notes with concern the tremendous damage done to public services 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.

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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.

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.

Conference notes that some national governments, including our own, have willingly applied austerity policies. Elsewhere, austerity has been forced on individual countries by the Troika of the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Conference condemns the undemocratic imposition of austerity on people who have voted against it.

Conference notes that since 2012, the European Commission has pursued its 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.”

Conference notes that EU negotiators are currently working behind closed doors to conclude the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) and Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) trade agreements. These agreements are a threat to employment, environmental and consumer protections and to the ability of national governments to pursue policies that adversely affect the ability of big companies to make profit. Conference applauds the efforts made by the union, in partnership with groups including War on Want and Global Justice Now, to highlight and campaign against these deals. Conference believes that whether the UK is in or out of the EU it will be important for us to continue to pursue this work to ensure that our public services are not undermined by pro-business bilateral trade deals.

Conference reaffirms our long-standing opposition to the imposition of neo-liberal policies at an EU level, expressed through our union’s opposition to the Maastricht and Lisbon treaties.

Conference believes that the European Union consistently gives primacy to the interests of capital over labour, and that the UK’s continued membership of the EU would be a block to the introduction of progressive policies by an incoming Labour government. Conference therefore sees the upcoming in/out referendum as an opportunity to end the UK’s membership of the EU and safeguard UK public services from the threat posed by EU deregulatory policies promoting liberalisation and marketisation.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign for a ‘Leave’ vote in any upcoming EU referendums;

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- 2) Highlight the argument that EU membership is a threat to quality jobs and public services;
- 3) Work with International and European-level organisations to challenge the neo-liberal orthodoxy and develop alternative economic strategies for national, European and International economic revival;
- 4) Continue to work with and develop links with trade unions representing public sector workers elsewhere in Europe, including Ver.di and the CGT;
- 5) Continue to work with Hope Not Hate to campaign against racist and xenophobic policies and parties and work with other European trade unions to oppose barriers being put up across Europe to deny assistance to people fleeing war zones and extreme poverty;
- 6) Continue to work with organisations including Global Justice Now and War on Want to stop international trade deals such as TTIP, CETA and TISA that give primacy to business interests over democratic decision-making.

Manchester

99. A Safe Haven for Refugees

Conference notes that at the end of 2014 there were almost 60 million people in the world who have been forcibly displaced as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, or human rights violations; this is equivalent to the size of the UK population. This was an increase of 8.3 million people in a single year and reflects the deteriorating situation in many countries.

Conference notes that the majority of refugees, 86 per cent, are hosted in developing regions with comparatively few being hosted by richer nations. In the case of Syria over 11 million people have been forced to flee their homes since the conflict began in 2011. Most refugees from the conflict remain in the host countries of Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt. Many live below the poverty line and face exploitation, discrimination and lack access to work and public services, including education and health. Only 10 per cent of those who have fled the conflict in Syria have tried to find refuge in Europe.

Conference is concerned that many EU countries have neglected their moral and international responsibilities to provide refuge to those fleeing danger and persecution. The UK government for example has committed to resettle just 20,000 refugees over five years, only 1,000 of whom had been accepted by January 2016. Conference believes that EU member states should implement a common strategy for the resettlement of a fair share of refugees. They should suspend the Dublin Convention, requiring the first member state where an asylum claim is lodged to be responsible for a person's asylum claim, as it impedes the rights of refugees to fair, efficient and effective protection, and allows governments to abscond their moral and collective responsibilities for resettlement.

According to the International Organisation for Migration, in 2015, 3,771 migrants died attempting to make the perilous journey across the Mediterranean Sea, accounting for 71 per cent of migrant deaths worldwide. Whilst the EU tripled its

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funding for rescue missions in the Mediterranean Sea in April 2015, reversing previous UK government opposition to saving lives at sea, efforts remain grossly inadequate given the scale of the crisis. Conference calls on the EU to substantially increase its search and rescue efforts in the Mediterranean Sea.

Conference notes that the EU adopted a directive in 2001 to provide temporary protection in the event of a mass influx of displaced persons, but they have failed to implement it. The directive provides for access to asylum procedures, accommodation, healthcare, education, social protection and employment. Conference urges the EU to implement the directive immediately.

The austerity agenda in many countries has exacerbated the crisis through major job cuts in key public services that deal with asylum applications, social housing, healthcare and other services that support the reception of refugees and their integration in society. UNISON should continue to make the case for decent public services to support refugees.

Conference is concerned at the increasing investment by EU countries in fences and other security measures which encourage people smuggling, instead of adequately funded reception centres and public services to respond to the crisis.

Some in positions of influence have chosen to demonise refugees by portraying them as a burden and dehumanise them. We must counter this dangerous rhetoric with the message that refugees are human beings fleeing danger and persecution and we have an obligation to welcome them.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Call on the European Union to provide a human rights approach to the refugee crisis in which all member states take responsibility for a significantly increased resettlement programme;
- 2) Continue to campaign for quality public services to ensure the effective integration of, and support for refugees;
- 3) Counter the rhetoric of those who demonise refugees, and make the case that the UK and Europe have a responsibility to provide a safe haven for those fleeing persecution;
- 4) Work with groups supporting and campaigning for the rights of refugees in pursuit of these ends.

East Midlands Region

Equalities

100. Defending Our Human Rights and Equality Protections

Conference condemns the Tory Government's sustained attack on the rights of public service unions and workers - rights guaranteed under International Labour Organisation (ILO) conventions. The undermining of the rights of trade unionists violates civil liberties and human rights including the freedom of association and assembly.

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Conference is therefore not surprised but is appalled that the Conservatives are intending to repeal the Human Rights Act (HRA) and replace it with a 'British Bill of Rights'. This, like the Trade Union Bill, is an ideological attack on our rights and freedoms. Workers rights and human rights are inseparable. We had to fight to win them, and now we must fight to defend them.

Conference recognises the important role that the HRA plays in organising, bargaining and negotiating on behalf of trade union members, for example:

- 1) Article 8: right to respect for private and family life - has been used successfully to recognise rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people;
- 2) Article 11: freedom of assembly and association - this specifically states "Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests". This article has been used successfully in the past by trade unions to expel British National Party members. It also enables us to join peaceful protests and participate in pride marches.

The Tories argue that a British Bill of Rights will ensure that the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) will no longer be able to overrule judgements made in British courts and will make "the Supreme Court supreme". However, for LGBT people, it has been necessary to use the ECtHR to win equality including decriminalisation of homosexuality, the right to marry, gender recognition and the right to be treated equally at work.

Shami Chakrabarti, director of human rights group Liberty, told the Daily Mirror that the proposal to scrap the HRA "is the gravest threat to freedom in Britain since the Second World War." Some rights may be limited and could be overturned such as the right to privacy or family life and appealing to the ECtHR would be lengthy and difficult.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Continue to promote understanding and use of human rights as an essential principle in defending the rights of our members and a vital tool for trade unionists and groups facing discrimination to challenge inequality and injustice;
- b) Work with appropriate structures of the union, including the self organised groups, General Political Fund and Labour Link, to campaign against the repeal of the HRA;
- c) Support Liberty's campaign to defend the HRA;
- d) Publicise information on the relevance of the HRA to trade unions, employment and equality.

National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee

Racism

101. Immigration, Detention and Deportation

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Conference notes:

- 1) The rise in anti-immigrant rhetoric and legislation both in the UK and across Europe;
- 2) The high proportion of Black workers in the UK who are being treated unfavourably in their workplaces by immigration legislation and policy. This is likely to impact negatively on their mental health and their ability to carry out their work duties effectively;
- 3) The lack of support provisions available for Black people and communities;
- 4) All workers have an interest in resisting racism and anti-immigrant scaremongering;
- 5) Migrant workers are a valuable and welcome part of the workforce and trade union movement.
- 6) Conference believes current immigration practice leads to unfavourable treatment of Black workers who do not have full legal rights to reside in the UK. They face a number of issues including:
 - a) Deportation before appeal
 - b) No right to housing
 - c) No financial support from public funds
 - d) Detention (which divides families)

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to work with the National Black members committee to:

- i) Request Labour Link informs the Labour Party of our opposition to anti-immigrant scapegoating and asks for their support to make changes to immigration legislation;
- ii) Continue to promote the UNISON affiliated 24 hour helpline with the Joint Council for Welfare of Immigrants and UNISON's migrant worker networks throughout the union, Black members' structures and in UNISON publications;
- iii) Work with organisations who have a record of best practice in supporting Black people on immigration issues;
- iv) Continue to work with anti-racist organisations – such as Hope not Hate – to combat anti-migrant racism;
- v) Raise awareness of the issues in UNISON publications.

National Black Members' Committee

102.The Refugee Crisis; the Media's Reporting and its Negative Impact

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The refugee situation that has been seen across Europe has been used by the media and politicians to vilify those seeking refuge, with incorrect and hostile terminology often used to depict those in need in a very negative way.

As wars rage across the Middle East there has been a large movement of people seeking refuge in the first safe country they come to, many attempting to escape the horrors they have witnessed in their own countries. Yet rather than explain the real reason why the refugee crisis has worsened, the media have used what is a humanitarian crisis to portray a very different story. Story after story is run of people coming to the UK simply to receive financial benefit, many of us know how far from reality this is. As the government's austerity drive continues, many look to for others to blame for the lack of jobs, lack of social housing and the reduction in the benefit system. Those who seek refuge here are often the first to be blamed, and this is further compounded when politicians use language such as 'swarm' to describe the world's most in need. The media and those who use such offensive language should be condemned for doing so, and pressure applied to ensure that correct language is used. Branches and regions should contact their local newspapers to highlight when incorrect language is used and at a national level, pressure should be applied to the larger media corporations.

In the Northern region, in conjunction with the TUC and the Public Services Alliance, material is being produced that dispels many of the myths regarding refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants and migrants. This can be used by activists in workplaces to highlight the inaccuracies of what is being portrayed in the media and beyond. This compliments the joint working with Show Racism the Red Card across the region.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Encourage members, coordinated through their branches, to write to local and national newspapers to question the incorrect and discriminatory language that is being used;
- 2) Encourage regions to work with branches to produce local material that can be used in workplaces to help dispel myths;
- 3) Encourage branches and regions to work with organisations such as Show Racism the Red Card.

Newcastle City

103. Refugees are welcome here

Conference notes that:

- 1) The world is witnessing the biggest movement of people since the Second World War;
- 2) Last year 3,000 people drowned in the Mediterranean Sea trying to reach Europe, while thousands more languish in refugee camps in the most appalling conditions;

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- 3) The government's response has been completely inadequate and has concentrated on seeking to demonise people who are fleeing war poverty and persecution not helping them;
- 4) Stand Up To Racism is a broad-based campaign that seeks to challenge racism, Islamophobia and the scapegoating of migrants and refugees.

Conference believes that:

- a) The one hundred thousand people who attended the refugees welcome here march in London in October organised by Stand Up To Racism shows that there is widespread public support for allowing more refugees into the UK;
- b) The government's austerity measures pose the real threat to peoples' standard of living not migrants and refugees.

Conference resolves to:

- i) Continue to campaign to make the slogan "Refugees are welcome" here a reality;
- ii) Support Stand Up To Racism's campaign to support the refugees of Calais.

London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority

104. Refugees and the Immigration Scandal

Conference, the horrific scenes of refugees being left to drown in the Mediterranean, 100,000 migrants and seeing the washed up body of Aylan Kurdi, brought it home to us that this is a matter of life and death.

The nation's conscience moved into action with the slogan "Refugees welcome here" and the UN Anti-Racist Demonstration on 19th March a symbol of hope and unity that we as UNISON members all embraced with banners and loud voices.

But Conference, have we not learnt anything throughout our history, years of discrimination, are we not all son's, daughter's, children of immigrants, migrants, refugees, our nation built on migration of people, but nothing so senseless then the war in Iraq, Afghanistan and now in Syria, having displaced so many people and creating this mass exodus

For us as UNISON member's conference, the toxic debate on immigration has deep echoes of a past that never leaves us, it is therefore vital that we in UNISON and other like-minded organisations/groups continue to highlight the anti-immigrant rhetoric seeping into our communities and weakening of anti-racist solidarity that scapegoat's refugees in the press, because they could one day be our members, our colleagues, our neighbours, our family and friends

We need to set the record straight as it is too easy to make this a political issue, but really it is about human beings, human kindness and that is something that we cannot afford to lose sight of.

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Conference, in UNISON we say in solidarity, making it loud and clear that 'Refugees will always be welcome here' and racism, Islamophobia will not in-prison our minds to scapegoat our fellow human beings.

The European Referendum on the issue of whether Britain should stay in or out, should not be based on immigration and we should not allow those that seek to divide us perpetrate their propaganda.

We therefore call on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Promote the Stand Up to Racism's Winter Appeal to support the refugees of Calais;
- 2) Continue to support affiliate campaign groups including the TUC, that seek to challenge racism, Islamophobia and the scapegoating of migrants and refugees;
- 3) Lobby the UK Government, through Labour Link to challenge racist immigration policies that impact on people's Human Rights and Civil Liberties.

Hammersmith and Fulham

Civil Rights

105.Female Genital Mutilation

Conference notes that an estimated 137,000 women and girls in Britain have undergone or are at risk from Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). A Freedom of Information request in 2014 revealed that in London almost 4,000 women and girls were treated for FGM between 2009 and 2014. Unfortunately, this number continues to grow across the capital.

FGM comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. There are no health benefits of FGM and it is recognised internationally as a human rights violation. FGM is mostly carried out on young girls between infancy and age 15, and it is a form of child abuse. Procedures can cause severe bleeding and problems urinating, and later cysts, infections, infertility as well as complications during childbirth. In some cases, the procedure can even lead to death.

FGM has been illegal in the UK since 1985, and the law was strengthened in 2003 to prevent children travelling from the UK to undergo FGM abroad. The Serious Crime Act 2015 introduced a new duty on all regulated healthcare professionals, social workers and teachers in England in Wales (including those working in private healthcare and education) to report to the police known cases of FGM involving victims under 18. This mandatory duty came into force on 31st October 2015. This is a personal duty which requires the individual professional who becomes aware of the case to report it. The responsibility cannot be transferred. Conference notes the importance of the new duty for safeguarding reasons, but it is vital that our members in health, social care and education are aware of and confident in carrying out this duty, with full support and guidance from their employers.

Tackling FGM has rightly risen up the political agenda in recent years following a number of high profile campaigns and changes to legislation such as the new

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reporting duty. FGM reflects deep-rooted inequality between the sexes and constitutes an extreme form of discrimination against women. The practice violates a woman's right to be free from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. UNISON is committed challenging discrimination and building equality, and so this issue should be a key part of our campaigning agenda.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council, working with the National Women's Committee and any other relevant national committee or sub-committee where appropriate to:

- 1) Raise awareness of this issue at regional and branch level, and through links with local communities where appropriate;
- 2) Ensure members across the devolved nations and English regions are clearly aware of the new legal duty to report FGM and support branches to cascade information;
- 3) Gather information from branches on how employers are supporting relevant staff in relation to the new duty to identify and promote best practice;
- 4) Explore opportunities through recently established links with healthcare professionals to support and provide sponsorship for awareness raising events currently being planned for 2016;
- 5) Consider a speaker on this issue at a future conference.

Greater London Region

Decentralisation

106.Devolution in England – Building UNISON's Influence

Conference notes the government's continuing pursuance of a policy and rhetoric around devolution in England. The introduction of the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill is the latest step in the development of this agenda.

Conference notes that the government's version of devolution has been viewed as deficient in regard to: democratic transparency and public engagement; the lack of constitutional protections for sub-national governance and the concentration of power in few hands at the city-region level; the danger of less wealthy areas being unable to fund services through new but circumscribed business rate and council tax powers; the lack of clarity about devolution's purpose and the unrealistic claims that it will lead to economic growth, increased productivity and cost-savings in public service delivery.

We reaffirm that Conference supports the following five principles in relation to devolution:

- 1) That public services are best delivered directly by democratically accountable bodies;

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- 2) 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;
- 3) That employment standards should be adopted in the delivery of public services – binding all employers;
- 4) That public bodies should promote sustainable economic, environmental and social well-being;
- 5) That it is important that people feel connected to civic politics, with opportunities for engagement and participation.

In Greater Manchester, the devolution agenda can be seen as combining both an emphasis on economic growth and the integration of public services (particularly health and social care services). Elsewhere, the emphasis is more on the former, with the combined authority and future elected mayor being presented more as helping economic development than reorganising public service delivery. Conference believes that both (economic development and service delivery) elements of the devolution agenda present opportunities and risks:

Many of our cities urgently require more economic opportunities, but where devolution is about attracting inward investment and boosting local competitiveness it can potentially lead to a damaging logic of tax cutting. Conference believes that we must avoid our combined authorities entering into a downward spiral of competition over limited opportunities to secure corporate investment. Instead, our city leaders should concentrate on making communities more cohesive and better places to live. Conference rejects a future of cut-throat inter-city competition, and reaffirms that we are one union with a common campaigning and bargaining agenda.

Where devolution involves the integration of services across geographical and organisational boundaries, it has the potential to improve outcomes for the public and job satisfaction for employees. However, service re-design also poses significant risk to UNISON members, especially in a context of austerity and increasing cost pressures.

Conference welcomes the development of a joint protocol in Greater Manchester on workforce matters. The agreement between the interim mayor, local council and health leaders, and the public service trade unions sets out principles on employment and consultation arrangements that will assist in ensuring that the workers' voice is heard in changes to public services.

Conference notes that public policy decisions and consultations are increasingly being taken at a city-region/combined authority scale. Policy decisions on this scale can have an impact on employment issues at local employer level. Conference believes that the union must be mindful of the danger of important decisions being taken at a scale that does not fit neatly with our branch structures.

Conference calls for the National Executive Council to:

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- a) Assist branches and regions to learn from each other's experience of devolution. Work to spread best practice amongst branches and regions through information section including cross-regional seminars and regular briefing updates;
- b) Help uncover, publicise and spread good local practice by political and public service leaders;
- c) Ensure that sufficient regional resources are available to be deployed at a city-region/combined authority level to make sure that UNISON plays its part in contributing to public policy consultations and strategic decisions on public services that impact upon our members as workers and citizens;
- d) Raise concerns about the undemocratic nature of devolution initiatives to date, and champion a better model for devolution in line with the five principles set out above.

North West Region

Northern Ireland

107. Protecting the Peace Process

Conference endorses UNISON Northern Ireland's strategic response to the Fresh Start Agreement and the political crisis in Northern Ireland in late 2015.

Our response recognises the political pressure exerted on parties, while rejecting all aspects of the Agreement which run counter to trade union principles and policies. This includes our rejection of all austerity measures and welfare cuts; the failure to implement commitments and equality and human rights; and the betrayal of victims and survivors of the conflict by unacceptable arrangements to deal with the past.

The tactics deployed by the UK Government as signatory to the Peace Agreement are a betrayal of its obligations to that Agreement. The general response of the Irish Government as co-signatory fell far short of its obligations.

However, nothing in that unfortunate process absolves those political parties in Northern Ireland which precipitated the crisis, from their failure to work collaboratively in the best interests of the people. They must now learn the lesson that playing party politics with the core Peace Agreement commitments destabilises the Peace Process itself.

Consequently, this Conference reaffirms our support for the UNISON-led campaign in Northern Ireland for a just, equal and peaceful society based on the centrality of equality and human rights.

Northern Ireland Region

Environment

108. Floods and Flood Defences in the UK

Conference agrees with the view of many, particularly people and Labour politicians in the north of the country, that the appalling flooding suffered by many thousands of people during the course of 2015 was the result of bad government planning and

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was significantly exacerbated by the successive cuts made by Tory and ConDem governments to flood defence projects and spending over the course of the last six years.

David Cameron has described the Boxing Day floods as “unprecedented” and insists that the Tory government has spent £100 million on flood defences in Yorkshire and Humberside. His assertion that the government had not cut flood defence projects and budgets or that the floods were unprecedented has been strongly challenged with many believing that the Tory created north/south divide in this country and the consequential cuts to flood defences is to blame for the disastrous flooding we have endured.

The scale of cuts to environment agency and other public funded budgets has left large parts of the country vulnerable to flooding. A project by Leeds City Council to improve flood defences was cut by the government in 2011 and recently the city was severely flooded. Similarly a project to provide flood defences for Pickering in North Yorkshire costing £20 million was also cancelled. However, the local community organised an academic study to provide flood defences using nature and working with various agencies developed flood defences costing £2 million. These flood defences used natural solutions such as leaky dams and tree planting and many other such measures to slow down the rate at which the water from the higher land drained into the rivers thereby preventing flooding to the town during the 2015 floods and at earlier peak rainfall times.

Conference agrees:

- 1) To call on the government to urgently revise its spending on environmental protection, to give the rest of the country comparable resource to London and to listen to and respond to the urgent concerns of people in areas affected by the flooding;
- 2) To ask the National Executive Council to work with the Labour party to adopt a similar approach to that instigated in Pickering and provide natural methods of flood prevention and defence for the rest of the country where these measures are assessed as appropriate;
- 3) To call on the National Executive Council to undertake a campaign to deliver both of the above.

Yorkshire and Humberside Region

109.Tackling Climate Change

Conference reaffirms our union’s proud internationalist outlook and our concern that climate change poses a threat to people around the world.

Conference applauds the work of UNISON members during the floods in the North of England and Scotland during the winter of 2015-16 and notes with concern predictions that the frequency and severity of flooding in the UK could increase as a consequence of climate change.

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Conference notes with concern the direction of the Conservative Government's policies on renewable energy and fracking.

Conference reaffirms our position that we need a viable pathway to decarbonise our energy supply without further investment in unabated fossil fuels and shale gas fracking. Conference welcomes the work of environmental campaigners in highlighting and taking action against developments that can be anticipated to worsen climate change.

Conference believes that the union has a distinctive and useful role to play in the debate about and actions against climate change. Our members across different sectors including local authorities, the NHS, the energy sector, the Environment Agency, airports and fire services all have an interest in issues around climate change as workers and citizens.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to work with organisations that campaign against climate change, including Climate Coalition, Campaign Against Climate Change, and the One Million Climate Jobs Campaign;
- 2) Support community-led anti-fracking campaigns;
- 3) Campaign for shorter, cheaper, easier and environmentally-friendly travel to work through supporting investment in our public transport infrastructure and highlighting travel as an issue in any changes to work organisation;
- 4) Encourage UNISON pension trustees to reduce our members' shareholdings in carbon-intensive energy, where this does not pose a risk to members' income security in retirement;
- 5) Encourage the role of union workplace environmental reps in identifying and implementing changes in all workplaces to reduce carbon emissions;
- 6) Campaign to protect the resilience of public services to withstand climate change-related events such as flooding.

Stockport

110. Climate Change and Trade Union Action

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 has 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.

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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 causing rises in sea levels that threaten 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.

Conference notes the agreement at the COP21 summit in Paris in December that the world must take steps to limit global warming to 2 degrees and preferably 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels in order to halt catastrophic climate change. However we also note the failure of the summit to agree enforceable actions on governments to ensure this is achieved.

Conference supports calls for climate justice where those communities most at risk from rising sea levels, the loss of fresh water supplies and the degradation of their arable land should be supported in responding to the crisis. This includes financial support and support for refugees who will flee from the disaster confronting them.

Conference also recognises that climate justice requires support for those workers in the carbon industries whose jobs will be phased out as the world moves to a non-carbon based economy. This requires a transition plan to be drawn up to ensure alternative employment for these workers and the communities who currently rely on the carbon based industries.

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) Explore how best to withdraw support for carbon extractive industries such as divestment by pension and public funds;
- 3) Oppose the development of fracking and unconventional gas extraction methods;
- 4) Support investment in "Green infrastructure" including improved public transport and cycle and walking infrastructure;
- 5) Support legislation to ensure homes are insulated and warm.

South Lanarkshire

Health

111.The Impact of Social Care Cuts on NHS waiting and response times

Conference agrees that the so-called austerity measures, or cuts as we would say, have resulted in the closure of many councils' residential social care homes.

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These cuts, in addition to those being made in the NHS, are and have been having a major impact on the ability of NHS services to meet waiting times, particularly Accident and Emergency services which are suffering routinely due to bed blocking caused in part by the lack of social care provision. This in turn creates problems for the ambulance services who can't unload the patients they have as Accident and Emergency departments are full and they can't release them until space becomes available causing delays for the service and creating a scenario where the response times of the services are not met due many ambulances waiting inordinate lengths of time to drop patients off at Accident and Emergency units.

Conference agrees to call on the National Executive Council to work with the Labour party to develop plans for a properly resourced and fully funded NHS with sufficient trained personnel and resources to eradicate waiting times and provide the medical treatments and drugs necessary to really improve the health of the nation free at the point of need and paid for solely through taxation.

Yorkshire and Humberside Region

112.Support the NHS Bill to reinstate a publicly funded, publicly provided and accountable NHS

Conference notes that the NHS is becoming increasingly fragmented, costly, and inequitable and the state no longer takes proper responsibility for the nation's health. As health workers we experience this through inadequate staffing and training and the tendering, outsourcing and privatisation of our jobs. We need our health services to be comprehensive, transparent, equitable and affordable. The only way all these goals can be attained is through full public ownership.

On 1 July 2015, 12 MPs from five political parties including Jeremy Corbyn and Caroline Lucas tabled the National Health Service Bill in the House of Commons, based on the second version of the NHS Reinstatement Bill. The NHS Bill is scheduled for its second reading on 11 March 2016.

Conference notes that the NHS Bill sets out the way to fully restore the NHS as an accountable public service by reversing 25 years of marketisation in the NHS, by abolishing the purchaser-provider split, ending contracting and re-establishing public bodies and public services accountable to local communities. It gives direction for the integration of health with social care and it removes the NHS from EU competition law.

The Bill has the official backing of (among others) the Medical Practitioners Union, the BMA, the Green Party, the SNP, Keep Our NHS Public (KONP), Doctors for the NHS (previously the National Health Service Consultants Association) and Disabled People Against Cuts.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to work within UNISON (including the Labour Link) for the adoption of the NHS Bill as official policy and to actively campaign for its adoption by campaign groups and other trades unions. Conference also calls on individual members to promote the Bill and to lobby their own MP both via the Bill's website and directly.

South West Yorkshire Partnership Health

2016 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

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Conference calls call on the National Executive Council to work with other UNISON bodies (including the Health SGE and Labour Link) to promote the Bill's aims within the Labour Party, our membership, campaign groups and other trades unions.

South West Yorkshire Partnership Health

114.Continued Cost Escalation of Pharmaceutical Drugs to the NHS

Conference notes the recent five years agreement between the Department of Health and the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI) covering patented medicines. In 2012 branded medicines cost the NHS £12 billion with the cost rising by 5% annually over the previous years.

The key factors of the agreement were that NHS spending on the patented medicines will remain flat for two years, followed by a small increase of just under 2% over the following three years – with the drug companies paying back any costs above this level, which would be divided between the four national health services, (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland).

The agreement is voluntary and pharmaceutical companies, who choose not to be part of the agreement will be hit with a statutory 15% price cut on their products. While Conference would welcome the potential savings of £1billion to the NHS, it

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notes the pharmaceutical industry still has a relative free hand in healthcare and are always looking to maximise their profits from the NHS.

However, the cost of medicines prescribed by England NHS Trusts has increased by 15% to £5.8 billion in 2013-4. This is not only due to new expensive drugs, but older branded drugs are suddenly escalating in price.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Investigate whether the increase in prices for pharmaceutical drugs to the NHS has had a detrimental effect on the NHS budgets and the services provided;
- 2) Highlight the billions wasted by the pharmaceutical industry in competition, marketing and advertising to develop new drugs and treatments, with the expectation the NHS will also be to fully fund the pharmaceutical industry;
- 3) Campaign on the research undertaken by pharmaceutical industry to be open to public and scientific scrutiny, with the necessary influence/powers on the pharmaceutical industry to place healthcare free at the point of use above the needs of private profit.

NHS Logistics

115. Defend Healthcare Student Bursaries

Conference welcomes the decision at the 2015 Health Service Group Conference to call on the Health Service Group Executive to campaign for all nursing and other “non-medical” pre-registration healthcare students to be paid a salary no less than the Living Wage.

Conference condemns the announcement in George Osborne’s November 2015, Autumn statement, to end the funding of bursary payments by Health Education England (HEE) to Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professional students from September 2017.

The government’s proposal means that the £1.2 billion which Health Education England (HEE) currently provides for nursing, midwifery and Allied Health Professional (AHPs) bursaries and tuition fees will be taken out of HEE’s budget. It is no surprise that the proposal has been met with anger and alarm.

Conference welcomes the UNISON briefing dated 27 November 2015 which pointed out that:

“Preliminary UNISON modelling, based on the continuation of pay restraint and the use of tuition fees and loans from 2017, projects that a student graduating in 2020 could be facing debts of £51,600 and a starting salary of £22,799 (bottom of band 5 assuming a 1% increase per year from 2016-2020.) Staff could be paying this debt off for 30 years!

Clearly this prospect may deter many from taking up these careers in the NHS. In particular this could have a devastating impact on nursing where the average age of students is 28, and half have childcare or other caring responsibilities.”

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This attack on student funding and the announcement to end the cap on student numbers, alongside a drive to increase tuition fees, will move pre-registration healthcare education even further towards an open market approach.

Conference is opposed to the attacks which undermine opportunities for accessing health education for many potential students and Conference supports the defence of the jobs and terms and conditions of staff in affected teams.

Conference welcomes the campaign established by students to oppose the proposals.

Conference notes the successful demonstrations on 9th January 2016 and that that the Keep the NHS Bursary petition obtained over 144,000 signatures leading to a debate in Parliament, two days later on 11th January.

Conference welcomes the initiative of the Student Summit organised by UNISON and the Our NHS Bursary Week of Action which coincided with the heartunions Week of Action.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to work with the Health Service Group Executive to:

- 1) Continue to support the work being carried out by UNISON to oppose the proposals;
- 2) Oppose any attacks on jobs or terms and conditions of members of staff in Health Education England as a result of the government's bursary proposals.

South Derbyshire Healthcare

116. Junior Doctor's dispute and unsocial hour's payments

Conference condemns the imposition of a contract on Junior Doctors by the government.

Conference gives its support to the BMA and Junior Doctors who in February 2016 announced three further strikes each of 48-hours as they seek to defend their terms and conditions and the health service.

Conference welcomes the decision of the UNISON Health Service Group Executive that met in November 2015, for unanimously agreeing its full support for the junior doctors.

Conference notes that the motion included the following wording:

"UNISON's Health Service Group Executive (HSGE) gives its full support to the proposed strike action by BMA members over changes to the contracts of Junior Doctor's. The HSGE calls upon UNISON's health branches to do everything they can to lawfully support any protests or picket lines when members are on breaks or off duty.

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The HSGE recognises that if this government succeeds in cutting unsocial hours pay for Junior Doctors then they will come back with their attacks on the pay of other health workers many of whom are represented by UNISON.

The HSGE believes that it is important that all health workers stand together to defend their terms and conditions from attack by this government and make clear that the NHS needs more money and not less to look after service users and that that this money should not be at the expense of the pay, terms and conditions of any health workers.”

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with the Health Service Group Executive to continue to give support to the BMA Junior Doctors;
- 2) Give its support to UNISON members in the NHS if they are faced with cuts in unsocial hour's payments;
- 3) Co-ordinate any lawful industrial action by UNISON in defence of unsocial hour's payments with other lawful disputes, where possible.

South Derbyshire Healthcare

117.The Blood Service needs a new generation of donors

Conference condemns cuts in the health service being made because in spite of claims the NHS budget is ring fenced there are not enough resources to meet demands. Conference welcomes the contribution that the NHS Blood and Transplant service (NHSBT) brings to the NHS as a whole. This service is built on the finest standards of a civilised society based on citizens of our nations giving their blood free of charge and donating organs after death.

In order to standstill NHSBT needs to recruit 200,000 new donors every year and we support the efforts being made by NHSBT to attract and recruit a new generation of blood donors. However we are very concerned that in order to achieve efficiencies NHSBT are gradually withdrawing or cutting back mobile collections that have traditionally taken place in village halls, community centres and in local communities. Whilst we recognise that the large Donor centres are efficient it is vitally important that NHSBT maintains its collection base across the whole of England in order to remind the public of the continued need for blood donations and their vital contribution that they make to support the NHS and their patient.

NHSBT must find a way of attracting new younger donors but this also means that collection teams must be properly resourced so that donors are dealt with quickly and speedily. Where people lead busy lives. Unless NHSBT can make the service easier to use in our local rural area's and support the mobile teams it may not continue to attract the donors it requires. To support the wider NHS.

Conference supports our NHSBT branches in their struggle on behalf of their members to maintain decent staffing levels across NHSBT and to point out publicly deficiencies when they are revealed.

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NHSBT Northern

118.The Blood Service needs a new generation of donors

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NHSBT must find a way of attracting new younger donors but this also means that collection teams must be properly resourced so that donors are dealt with quickly and speedily. Where people lead busy lives unless NHSBT can make the service easier to use and support it will continue to attract the donors it requires.

Conference supports our NHSBT branches in their struggle on behalf of their members to maintain decent staffing levels across NHSBT and to point out publicly deficiencies when they are revealed.

National Blood and Transplant Central

119.Dementia Care and Support

Conference notes that with the UK population ageing, dementia is becoming far more prolific. Dementia is a broad umbrella term used to describe a range of progressive neurological disorders. There are many different types of dementia and some people may have a combination of types.

Symptoms of dementia can include memory loss, cognitive ability loss (such as confusion) and communication loss. Dementia can be a combination of one or all of these symptoms, which have been occurring for a period of time and are progressively getting worse.

Dementia can be incredibly difficult for carers. Many of our members promise their partners that they will always care for them and are left physically and emotionally exhausted. Trying to get help or speaking to the boss can, for many, feel like a betrayal. So for many, trying to care for a family member with dementia, as well as working, can be lonely, exhausting and feel impossibly difficult.

Conference notes that dementia has, and will have, a profound effect on the lives of our members, especially women, who are or will in the future become carers for a

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family member with dementia. Conference further notes that as dementia becomes more prolific, as it will, then the impact on our members work lives will become equally prolific.

Just as in other forms of caring responsibility, our members may need flexible working arrangements, time off to accompany family with hospital appointments and the need to leave work at short notice if there is a problem that needs immediate attention. Conference welcomes the work of the Aneurin Bevan Health UNISON branch in its campaign around dementia awareness and notes the major conference in Wales that it is staging and funding on Wednesday 8 June 2016 in Newport to discuss dementia with experts, employers and activists.

Conference also welcomes the work that many branches have undertaken in terms of dementia awareness and the work that UNISON and the Open University has done to support care workers. Conference agrees that Dementia and the support for UNISON members who are dementia carers is a serious governmental, social as well as industrial issue which is going to get worse and which needs to be addressed now. Conference also agrees that UNISON needs to take the lead to encourage greater partnership working and understanding between employers and their staff around dementia including flexible working practices. Conference further agrees that UNISON must also build in understanding and flexibility around dementia and its impact on our activists in everything it organises.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Conduct research, with the assistance of many mainstream dementia organisations, on the likely future impact of dementia on the families of our UK healthcare members and to the future resourcing of the NHS;
- 2) To commission, consider and publish best practice guidelines for use when activists and organising staff are supporting members who are dementia carers, such as flexible working;
- 3) To publicly campaign and work with healthcare employer organisations and Governments across the UK to deliver such best practice guidelines;
- 4) To work with other Service Groups and the National Executive Council to consider the possibility of a UNISON and/or TUC led UK dementia conference that will consider how UK public services need to be equipped to adapt both financially and industrially to dementia in the future;
- 5) To consider how dementia care may impact on the ability of our healthcare members to be activists in the future and whether our values of democracy, participation, equality and solidarity will be impacted by the rise of dementia.

Aneurin Bevan Health

120.Prostate Cancer Testing

Prostate cancer is the most common form of cancer amongst men and trans women in the UK, with the charity Prostate Cancer UK estimating that that 1 in 8 will suffer

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from this cancer at sometime in their lives. This figure rises to 1 in 4 if you are a member of the black community or have a history of prostate cancer in the family.

Fears of cancer and urban myths around testing is responsible for many refusing to contemplate testing for prostate cancer until symptoms have developed. The sadness is that prostate cancer is eminently treatable if it is caught early enough. One method of monitoring for this cancer is the Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) blood test, which monitors the prostate and highlights activity which may lead to an early diagnosis of prostate cancer. European research in 2009 indicated that PSA testing reduced prostate cancer mortality rates by 20% amongst 50 to 74 year olds.

Conference congratulates the Black Members and Retired Members organisations for raising awareness of prostate cancer at their conferences in recent years and applauds the work their National Committees have done to support and publicise the work of Prostate Cancer UK. However, Conference is concerned that there is no provision for a national screening programme for men and trans women for prostate cancer in the UK. Conference believes that regular PSA testing for men and trans women over 50 would lead to increased early treatment for this cancer.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Support Prostate Cancer UK and promote awareness of prostate cancer in UNISON communications, in particular publicising PSA testing;
- 2) Campaign for national screening programmes for prostate cancer to be implemented across the UK.

Islington

Efficient and Effective Union

Branch Funding

Motion 121 Gateway to the Future: Stable and Sustainable Branch Resources is connected to the National Executive Council's report on Branch Finances. Submitting bodies should note that recommendations in the report can be subject to amendment, but the body of the report cannot.

121.Gateway to the Future: Stable and Sustainable Branch Resources

Conference welcomes the work of the Branch Resources Review and the National Executive Council report, Gateway to the Future: Stable and Sustainable Branch Resources. Conference agrees that the report and recommendations will secure the financial stability of the union, while giving immediate support to branches that are struggling to support members.

Our branches are the lifeblood of the union and UNISON is proud to have a tradition of strong, active branches that support local members, organise and mobilise, campaign for change and participate fully in the democracy of the union.

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Since the election of the coalition government in 2010, UNISON has faced major challenges as a result of an intensifying austerity agenda based on deep cuts in public spending. These cuts have focused on a programme of nearly one million job losses in essential local and public services – overwhelmingly in the areas where UNISON organises and represents members. This will be compounded by a raft of new hostile legislation, including the Trade Union Bill.

The National Executive Council fully recognises that the government's austerity agenda has put huge pressures on our branches. It was with this in mind that in 2010 the General Secretary made a commitment to national delegate conference to introduce a dedicated fund to directly support branches in their struggle against public sector cuts. The National Executive Council approved the creation of the Fighting Fund in December 2010.

In order to create this dedicated pool of money to directly support branches, budget reductions have been made year-on-year at the national centre with resources being focused on maintaining front line posts through regional budgets and the Fighting Fund.

All of this has been done against a background of falling income, from a peak of £173.4 in 2011 to £166.8m in 2015. This has led to national and regional expenditure cuts of £5m, managed through strict budgetary controls.

By the end of 2016, the Fighting Fund will have provided an extra £29.2m to directly support branches, creating some 100 extra posts for each year from 2011 onwards.

The evidence shows that overall, the current percentage of subscription income allocated to branch funding, 23.5 per cent, still delivers sufficient funds to cover all branch activities. Indeed, financial data shows that for those branches with reserves, the total amount held has increased from £37.8m in 2011 to £39.1m in 2014.

However, there is huge variation between branches in the level of funds and resources (including staffing, premises, IT and other support mechanisms), which is in danger of creating a two-tier union.

An across the board percentage increase would be likely to increase the amount of money held in branch reserves and would be unable to meet all the requirements of those branches in most need now.

The Branch Resources Review recognises that the union will continue to face major challenges which will have a changing impact on our branches and our union structures.

The work of the review is focused on the need to:

- 1) Ensure urgently that local branches are viable and serving the membership as prescribed by the rule book;
- 2) Develop longer term proposals to address inequalities identified through detailed analysis;
- 3) Ensure the whole union's financial strength and sustainability for the future.

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To meet these objectives, it was recognised that many branches need assistance now and this required short-term interim measures, but that such assistance must be tailored to branch needs rather than providing a one size fits all solution.

Conference recognises the significant work to develop the tools, training and support infrastructure to introduce the activity-based budgeting model. This enables and supports branch's campaigning and organising and educational priorities. It has now been piloted with branches across all regions of the union, covering some 41.5% of the membership, and feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

The process involves branch committees producing a work plan and a budget which reflects UNISON's objectives. As a result, the specific needs for resources are identified as part of the joint branch assessment. This allows resources to be channelled to where they required most and where they can be used most effectively for the benefit of not just the branch but the whole union. More importantly, it identifies those branches struggling through lack of funds or in need of additional help, support and resources.

It is proposed that those branches that have insufficient funds to support their agreed work plans will in 2016 receive a top-up from the regional pool, providing immediate support to branches most in need.

In the longer term, the widespread adoption of activity-based budgeting will allow for a fundamental assessment of branch needs and how they can be met.

Conference therefore agrees that activity based budgeting should be rolled out to all branches. This process will be monitored and evaluated with a view to forming the basis of a future scheme for resourcing branches. The arrangements need to be fair and transparent and operate under the governance of lay members to ensure our funds are applied in the most equitable and effective way possible.

Conference agrees the following for resourcing our branches:

- a) The following process will apply as from 1 January 2017;
- b) All branches will continue to be funded in accordance with the provisions of the current branch funding formula;
- c) There are no proposals to change branch reserves;
- d) All branches are required to produce annual budgets under Rule G 2.2.9. It is proposed that these should be activity-based budgets, prepared by the branch committee and agreed as part of the regular joint branch assessment process;
- e) All annual budgets should be consistent with the branch work plan, include appropriate cost estimates and reflect the union's objectives and priorities;
- f) The annual branch budget will be entered onto the online branch accounting system as part of the joint branch assessment. Training, help and support will be provided as needed;

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- g) Where a branch has agreed a work plan and budget as part of the joint branch assessment process, but does not have the resources to meet the work plan, there will be a provision for the branch budget to be automatically topped up from the regional pool;
- h) Where a branch wants to fund activities that are not agreed as part of the joint branch assessment as meeting the union's objectives, there will be an appeal process whereby the budget is referred to a joint regional council body for resolution;
- i) During 2016, in consultation with regions, the regional pool structure and criteria will be revised to facilitate increased funding for branches whose reserves are insufficient to fund their activity-based budget work plan;
- j) The National Executive Council will evaluate and appraise the implementation of activity-based budgeting to ensure that sufficient resources can be made available to meet the proper running, management, activity and other expenses of each branch;
- k) Detailed advice, guidance, training and support will be provided to assist branches in maximising their entitlement under the existing formula, taking into account the results of the activity-based budgeting process and levels of reserves.

National Executive Council

122.Future of Branch Funding

Conference notes that UNISON's branches are of ever-increasing importance in the provision of support for members. The reduction in the number of employers in national bargaining arrangements and the fragmentation of the workforce point to this trend.

Since 2010, the large increase in collective reorganisations at the local level due to cuts in central government expenditure and outsourcing, and the increase in resultant individual casework, have all shifted the workload further onto our branches. Facility time of lay activists has come under attack since 2010, placing further strain on activists within branches.

Conference also notes the continuing need for branches to campaign for their members, particularly as cuts continue apace under the current Tory government.

However, Conference notes that despite all these changes to the terrain on which the union operates, UNISON has not changed its scheme of funding to bring the union up-to-date to meet these challenges.

Conference believes that our trade union must live within its means and prepare for potential loss in subs income given the government's attack on DOCAS. Therefore a review must be undertaken to prioritise activity and expenditure at the union's regional and national tiers in order to free up sufficient funds as are necessary to support branches in their critical and growing work, the success or failure of which will determine the future of our union.

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Conference does not believe that the pilot to review activity-based budgeting practices for branches will provide, in and of itself, a long-term solution to the fundamental mismatch of where the union's resources are and where they need to be.

Conference therefore calls for all appropriate national committees to consider:

- 1) A new scheme of funding to be in operation by 1st January 2018, based on the following principles:
 - a) Any branch with more than £15 per full member in general fund reserves at the annual point of calculation will not qualify for additional funding beyond the 25% specified below – reserves in industrial action and other special funds shall not be counted towards this total;
 - b) Branches will receive an increase in the standard entitlement of total annual subscription income from 20% to 25%;
 - c) All additional percentage enhancements for branches will remain unchanged;
 - d) This will result in the fixed proportion of total annual subscription income allocated to branch funding increasing from 23.5% to no more than 28.5%, and the fixed proportion of total annual subscription income allocated to the regions and national office decreasing from 76.5% to no less than 71.5%;
 - e) That over time there will be significant further devolvement of resources to branches.
- 2) A review of national and regional office activity, with the full participation of lay members and under lay member control, to be conducted during the remainder of 2016 and 2017, so as to prioritise union activity and expenditure at regional and national tiers with a view to reducing or ceasing expenditure that may no longer be affordable.

Camden

123.Branch Funding

Conference notes that UNISON's branches are of ever-increasing importance in the provision of support for members. The reduction of employers in national bargaining arrangements and the fragmentation of the workforce point to this trend.

Since 2010, the large increase in collective reorganisations at the local level due to cuts in central government expenditure and outsourcing, and the increase in resultant individual casework, have all shifted the workload further onto our branches. Facility time of lay activists has come under attack since 2010, placing further strain on activists within branches.

Conference also notes the continuing need for branches to campaign for their members, particularly as cuts continue apace under the current Tory government.

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However, Conference notes that despite all these changes to the terrain in which the union operates, UNISON has not changed its scheme of funding to bring the union up-to-date to meet these challenges.

Conference believes that our trade union must live within its means. Therefore a review must be undertaken to prioritise activity and expenditure at the union's regional and national tiers in order to free up sufficient funds as are necessary to support branches in their critical and growing work, the success or failure of which will determine the future of our union.

Conference does not believe that the pilot to review activity-based budgeting practices for branches will provide, in and of itself, a long-term solution to the fundamental mismatch of where the union's resources are and where they need to be.

Conference therefore calls for:

- 1) A new scheme of funding to be in operation by 1 January 2018, based on the following principles:
 - a) Any branch with more than £15 per full member in general reserves at the annual point of calculation will not qualify for additional funding;
 - b) All other branches will receive an increase in the standard entitlement of total annual subscription income from 20.0% to 25.0%;
 - c) All additional percentage enhancements for branches will remain unchanged;
 - d) This will result in the fixed proportion of total annual subscription income allocated to branch funding increasing from 23.5% to no more than 28.5%, and the fixed proportion of total annual subscription income allocated to the regions and national office decreasing from 76.5% to no less than 71.5%;
 - e) That over time there will be significant further devolvement of resources to branches.
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***Barnet
Manchester
Salford City
West Sussex***

124.Branch Funding

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Conference does not believe that the pilot to review activity-based budgeting practices for branches will provide, in and of itself, a long-term solution to the fundamental mismatch of where the union's resources are and where they need to be.

Conference therefore resolves to adopt a new scheme of funding to be in operation by 1st January 2018, based on the following principles:

- 1) Any branch with more than £15 per full member in general reserves at the annual point of calculation will not qualify for additional funding;
- 2) All other branches will receive an increase in the standard entitlement of total annual subscription income from 20.0% to 25.0%;
- 3) All additional percentage enhancements for branches will remain unchanged;
- 4) This will result in the fixed proportion of total annual subscription income allocated to branch funding increasing from 23.5% to no more than 28.5%, and the fixed proportion of total annual subscription income allocated to the regions and national office decreasing from 76.5% to no less than 71.5%;
- 5) That over time there will be significant further devolvement of resources to branches.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to review of national and regional office activity, with the full participation of lay members and under lay member control, to be conducted during the remainder of 2016 and 2017, so as to prioritise union activity and expenditure at regional and national tiers with a view to reducing or ceasing expenditure that may no longer be affordable.

Lambeth

Resources

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125.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 e-mail and postal addresses) is published online and made available to all UNISON members annually.

Norfolk County

Member Services

126.Recognising continued membership of the union

Conference recognises the need to recruit new members into the union to maintain our effectiveness, to secure a sound bargaining position with employers and to grow our union into the future.

However, it is equally important that we work to retain existing UNISON members; long-serving, committed members remain the lifeblood of this union. We clearly have an aspiration to retain all the new members we recruit for as long as possible and certainly for as long we organise in the workplaces they work in.

To this end, Conference recognises the merits of formal recognition of the long service that some of our members invest within UNISON. We seek that this Conference requires that the National Executive Council undertakes a scoping exercise to determine the viability of recognising long-serving UNISON (and predecessor unions) membership with an award of an appropriate membership service badge at intervals of 10 years, running from continuous membership of 10 years through to membership of 50 years.

Environment Agency North West

Amendment to Rules

Rule D Structure of the Union at National Level

1. Rule D National Delegate Conference

Rule D 1.1

Delete "annually" and replace with "biennially"

Derbyshire County

2. Rule D The right to attend and speak

Add new rule D 1.7.6

"D 1.7.6 Two representatives of the Private Contractors National Forum at the national level."

Renumber current rules D 1.7.6.-1.7.9 accordingly.

National Executive Council

3. Rule D Conference quorum and procedure

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Amend Rule D 1.10.4

In the second sentence after "A Regional Council," insert the words: "the Private Contractors National Forum,"

In the third sentence after "A Regional Council" insert the words: "the Private Contractors National Forum,"

National Executive Council

4. Rule D Functions and Authority

Rule D 2.1

After "national black members seats delete "and" and insert a comma, and after " a young members seat" insert " and two disabled members seats".

Insert new rule D 2.6:

" D 2.6 Disabled Members' Seats

There will be an additional two representatives, reserved for disabled members, one female, and one general, elected from a national constituency of all regions. No member shall be a candidate for election to the disabled member's seats unless she/he has been nominated by at least two branches or a regional disabled members self organised group. The period of office will be two years."

National Disabled Members Committee

5. Rule D Service Group Conference

Rule D 3.4.1

Delete "annually" and replace with "biennially"

Derbyshire County

6. Rule D Service Group Conference

D 3.4.5

Delete "annually" and replace with "biennially"

Derbyshire County

7. Rule D Service Group Conference

Add new rule D 3.4.6.6

"D 3.4.6.6 Two representatives (being members of branches in the relevant service group) of the Private Contractors National Forum at national level."

Renumber current rules D 3.4.6.6 and D 3.4.6.7 to D 3.4.6.7. and D 3.4.6.8

National Executive Council

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8. Rule D Service Group Conference

Add new rule D 3.4.9

"D 3.4.9 The Private Contractors National Forum may submit up to two motions and amendments to the Group's National Conference."

Renumber current rules D 3.4.9-3.4.11 to D 3.4.10-3.4.12.

National Executive Council

9. Rule D Regional Structure

Rule D 3.6.5

Add at the end: "(unless the Service Group Executive representatives are also branch delegates)."

Kirklees

10. Rule D Rule D 4 Private Contractors National Forum

Add new rule D 4

"D 4 Private Contractors National Forum

4.1 A Private Contractors National Forum shall be established consisting of up to two representatives from each of the Private Contractors National Company Forums.

.2 The Private Contractors National Forum may, subject to the Union's rules, send up to two delegates and two motions to the National Delegate Conference, each National Service Group Conference.

.3 The activities of the Private Contractors National Forum will be reported to the NEC.

.4 The National Executive Council shall give the Private Contractors National Forum financial support within the union's guidelines."

Renumber the following sections as follows: D4 Self Organised Groups to D5 Self Organised Groups; D5 Young Members' Organisation to D6 Young Members' Organisation; D6 Retired Members' Organisation to D7 Retired Members' Organisation.

National Executive Council

Rule G Branches

11. Rule G The Branch Committee

G 2.1.1

After "Code of Good Branch Practice," insert "which will be reviewed biennially,"

Derbyshire County

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12. Rule G Branch Officers

G 4.1.2

Delete "annually" and replace with "biennially"

Derbyshire County

Rule J The Political Fund

13. Rule J The Political Fund

Insert new J 9

"9 RULES ON COMMENCEMENT OF SECTION 10 TRADE UNION ACT 2015

9.1 This rule shall come into effect on the Effective Date.

9.2 In this rule:

2015 Act means the Trade Union Act 2015

COMMENCEMENT DATE means the day on which section 10 of the 2015 Act comes into force

EFFECTIVE DATE means the Commencement Date or, if the 2015 Act comes into force on a day which is not the first day of a month, the first day of the month in which the 2015 Act comes into force

9.3 On the Effective Date the following rules shall cease to have effect: the last paragraph of rule J.3, rules J.4.1, J.4.2, J.4.3, J.4.4, J.4.5, J.4.6, J.4.10, rule J.6, rule J.7, and rules J.8.6, J.8.7, J.8.8, J.8.9, J.8.10 and J.8.11.

9.4 No portion of the subscription payable by any member of the union in respect of any day falling on or after the Effective Date shall be a contribution to the political fund. The rates of contribution to the General Political Fund Section and the Affiliated Political Fund Section in respect of any day falling on or after the Effective Date shall be 0% and no portion of any subscription paid by any member of the union in respect of any day falling on or after the Effective Date shall be paid into the General Political Fund Section or the Affiliated Political Fund Section.

9.5 There may be added to the General Political Fund Section or the Affiliated Political Fund Section:

.1 contributions paid to the General Political Fund Section or the Affiliated Political Fund Section in respect of any day falling before the Effective Date; and

.2 property which accrues to the General Political Fund Section or the Affiliated Political Fund Section, as the case may be, on or after the Effective Date in the course of administering its assets

but no other moneys of the union shall be applied to either section of the fund on or after the Effective Date.

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9.6 The union may make payments on or after the Effective Date from the General Political Fund Section and/or the Affiliated Political Fund Section in accordance with rules J.8.3 and/or J.8.5 but no payment shall be made which causes either section of the fund to be in deficit or increases an existing deficit.

9.7 In rules J.8.2 and J.8.4 any reference to members contributing to or being contributors to the General Political Fund Section or the Affiliated Fund Section shall be replaced by a reference to members who were contributors to the General Political Fund Section or the Affiliated Fund Section (as the case may be) on the day immediately before the Effective Date."

National Executive Council

Rule P Standing Orders for Conferences

14. Rule P Application of Standing Orders

Amend Rule P 1.3.5

At the beginning of the third sentence insert the words: "The Private Contractors National Forum,"

National Executive Council

Schedules

Schedule A Rates of Subscription

15. Schedule A Retired Members

Schedule A 6

Delete first paragraph from "Retired Members" up to "£15 life membership."

Replace with: "Retired Members (other than those who were retired or life members of COHSE, NALGO or NUPE on Vesting Day or those in UNISON retired membership at 31 December 2016) shall pay £10 per year."

Wiltshire

Schedule C Elections

16. Schedule C Elections

Schedule C 4

Add at end: "Where the law allows, the National Executive Council may determine that an election shall be by either postal ballot and/or electronic ballot."

National Executive Council

Motions Ruled Out of Order

Can be dealt with in other ways

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Retired members to fill some Branch Officer posts

The 2015 Retired Members Conference carried an amended Motion 27, submitted by Cymru/Wales Region, proposing that a review of Rule C2.6.3 be carried out by the National Executive Council with a view to creating opportunities for retired members to put themselves forward for election to those offices of the branch which are not involved in the pay and conditions of working members standing for such offices. In view of this, and restrictions in facility time being experienced by branches, Conference calls on the National Executive Council in liaison with the National Retired Members' Committee, to explore ways by which retired members might help fill the possible gaps at branch level.

East Sussex

Conflicts with an Existing Rule

Right to Strike

Conference notes the Tory Government's attack on our trade union rights, including the already very limited right to strike.

Conference believes:

- 1) That further restrictions on our trade union rights are motivated by the Conservatives' desire fundamentally to undermine our movement and our democracy in order to deprive working class people of the ability to fight back against their attacks;
- 2) The new restrictions are only the latest in a long line of anti-union laws that have made British working class industrial activity some of the lowest in Europe. It is crucial that the labour movement commits itself to the repeal of all anti-union laws.

Conference further believes:

- a) Jeremy Corbyn's victory in the Labour leadership election, and his commitment to restoring the right to take solidarity strike action, gives us a powerful voice in parliament to help us fight for trade union rights;
- b) That in the face of the new restrictions, Unite's call to support strikes by their members, whether they are lawful or not, is a positive development.

Conference resolves:

- i) To support and defend all our members who might be criminalised under these new laws;
- ii) To make an important focus of our campaigns, working within our communities to explain that the right to strike is a fundamental democratic right;
- iii) To work with allies in the TUC to call for a national demonstration against the Trade Union Bill/Act;

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- iv) To approach local Trades Councils and other union bodies with a view to campaigning locally, including organising public meetings and calling for councillors and Labour MPs publicly to condemn the Tories' plans and advocate Labour repeals them when it comes to office;
- v) That this campaign should include discussions about what actions the movement should take if legitimate trade unionism is pushed outside the law;
- vi) To continue to call for the repeal of all the anti-union laws and the introduction of positive legal rights, including rights to strike, picket and taken solidarity and political industrial action.

Lambeth

Could place the union in legal jeopardy

Defeat the Government's Housing and Planning Legislation

Conference notes the Housing and Planning Bill that was the subject of debate and extensive potential amendment in the House of Lords after its Third Reading in the Commons. The main points of the Bill include:

- 1) The extension of the Right to Buy (RtB) to Housing Association tenants;
- 2) A compulsion on local councils to sell-off their most 'valuable' homes, with the proceeds to be used to pay for RtB subsidies;
- 3) The imposition of market or 'near market' rents for tenants with income over £30,000 (£40,000 in London);
- 4) The abolition of lifetime 'secure' tenancies by replacing them with fixed-term tenancies of 2-5 years;
- 5) The ability for private developers to build 'Starter Homes' instead of genuinely affordable social housing on new developments.

Conference condemns these proposals because they would:

- a) Do nothing to solve an already severe housing crisis, but will effectively exacerbate it by reducing the number of permanent, genuinely affordable homes for rent and will only encourage building for profit and not for need;
- b) Introduce means-testing to council and social housing;
- c) Undermine stable, mixed communities and the housing rights of vulnerable people.

Conference further believes that the housing crisis is damaging the living standards and quality of life of many UNISON and other trade union members. Workers on low and indeed moderate pay, particularly in Greater London and the South East of England, now find it increasingly difficult to afford a decent home within reasonable commuting distance of their workplace. An increasing number of our members face exorbitant rents in sub-standard private rented accommodation or excessively long

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commutes. Any improvements in pay and conditions won for our members are swiftly eroded by housing and travel costs. Housing is now a significant workplace issue and one that UNISON and the whole labour movement needs to campaign around, starting with unqualified opposition to the proposals contained in the Housing and Planning Bill.

Conference therefore resolves to:

- i) Join with other unions, tenants' organisations and housing campaigns, particularly Defend Council Housing and Kill the Bill, in intensifying opposition to the Housing and Planning Bill and to actively promote demonstrations and protests against the Bill;
- ii) Call on the National Executive Council to work with the Labour Link to press for the Labour party nationally to adopt and campaign for policies supporting:
 - A) The repeal in full of the proposals currently contained in the Housing and Planning Bill, should these become an Act of Parliament;
 - B) The launching of a massive programme of council house construction;
 - C) The end once and for all of the RtB programme whether in the Council or Housing Association sector;
 - D) A new and clear definition of 'affordable' in the context of housing expenditure, linked not to a supposed 'market rate' but to a proportion, not to exceed 25%, of the average wage;
 - E) The introduction of strong rent controls and strengthened regulation of the private rented sector, ensuring adequate space and building standards;
 - F) Stiff financial penalties for property owners who leave residential accommodation vacant;
 - G) Labour councils should be allowed to use reserves and borrowing powers to fund a massive Council House building programme.
- iii) Call on Councils and Housing Associations not to implement the changes and to support any that take such a stand.

Camden

Trade Union Bill

Conference completely opposes in total the Conservative Government's Trade Union Bill, believes the contents of this bill are an attack on trade union organisation and its campaigning capacity against austerity.

Conference further notes that the Bill;

- 1) Denies trade union members the right to online or secure workplace balloting whilst imposing thresholds, that breach International Labour Organisation (ILO) conventions.

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- 2) Seeks to introduce a 14 day notice period for industrial action.
- 3) Provides for new picketing arrangements that would provide trade union members with less rights than someone being suspected of a criminal offence.
- 4) Gives the Trade Union Certification officer increased rights to interfere with trade union business.
- 5) Gives UK government ministers the right to dictate trade union facility time arrangements to other public sector employers.
- 6) Prohibits public sector employers from deducting trade union subscriptions from their employees' salaries.

Conference believes these measures are an attack on civil liberties and human rights as well as an attack on working people throughout the UK.

Conference is encouraged by statements from Glasgow City Council, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, and the Scottish Government in stating that they oppose and will defy the Bill, and encourages UNISON members to ensure that these statements are adhered to, if the Bill becomes statute.

Finally, Conference encourages every UNISON member to make their opposition to this Bill known to councillors and parliamentarians, and asks the Scottish and UK UNISON organisations to build a strategy of defiance to defeat this Dickensian piece of legislation up to and including the use of united, co-ordinated industrial action across the public and private sector trade union movement.

City of Glasgow

Fighting The Anti Trade Union Bill

Conference agrees the fight against the Trade Union Bill must continue regardless of whether it is amended in any favourable way during its passage into law via the unelected House of Lords.

It contains far too many blatant anti-union strands for it to be ignored simply because we lose the campaign to overturn the minds of politicians who are anti trade union in the first place.

We must draw the lessons from our responses to a previous round of anti trade union legislation in the 1980s, which failed to remove the laws from the statute book and, instead, allowed some in our movement to embrace them as somehow positive and 'democratic'.

Clearly, if the Trade Union Bill is implemented unamended, UNISON has an immediate task to put in place provision for the recruitment of workers using direct debit as a replacement for checkoff/ DOCAS (deductions of contributions at source) as well as ensuring that adequate advice is circulated to all branches concerning other provisions around picketing, ballots etc.

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However, we need to organise a political response as well if our employers seek to use the provisions of the bill to either criminalise trade unionists or sequester union funds.

The National Executive Council is therefore instructed to immediately discuss both within the TUC, STUC, Wales TUC and ICTU and with all other public sector trade unions a proportionate response should there be punitive measures threatened against unions or individuals.

These discussions should include the consideration of organising legitimate industrial action to defeat such attacks, and any other measures democratically deemed necessary.

Dundee City

Securing the Local Government Pension Scheme England and Wales for the next 100 years (Keep Osborne's thieving hands off our pension funds)

Not printed

Housing Associations

Defend Social Housing

Conference notes the following:

The Conservative Government is launching an all-out attack on the provision of social housing, the outcome of which will be to effectively end it. Legislation currently being introduced through parliament entails the following:

- 1) The phasing out of lifetime secure tenancies for Council tenants. Although this will not apply to those who already have a secure tenancy, in future those provided with council housing will be only offered tenancy contracts of between two and five years. At the end of this period, there will be a review of housing need at that time and it could be deemed that a family or individual is able to then rent in the private market or be moved to different social housing that is considered appropriate;
- 2) For existing tenants, the introduction of the pernicious and so-called "Pay to stay" provision families or individuals with house hold incomes of £40,000 plus in London and £30,000 plus outside of London, forced either to either buy their property, move, or pay a market rent for it; otherwise they will be evicted. The legislation will affect people on modest and low incomes, couples earning approximately £20,000 a year each in London and £15,000 a year outside of it will find themselves affected. In using the term "market rent", the government appears to mean the average market rent for the area. This means that in London and certain other parts of England and Wales, but particularly in the south of England, people will be forced to pay rents which will in many cases exceed their actual incomes;
- 3) Forcing local authorities to sell properties which are deemed to be of "high value" as they become vacant, thus diminishing even further the supply of housing for

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those in need. In some cases it may be that properties currently being built will have to be sold on the open market even before there is a chance to let them;

- 4) Extension of the Right to Buy to Housing Association tenants, again further diminishing the supply of social housing. Having been introduced in the 1980's, one of the major achievements of Right to Buy is that many former council properties are now in the hands of private landlords who in many cases rent the properties at high market rents to people who need social housing and are on local authority waiting lists.

The government is obsessed with home ownership and supports renting only when it is through the private market. Yet its proposals for starter homes for people to buy are for many people a non-starter, with the cost of one of these homes in the Greater London set to be a staggering £450,000.

Social housing that is provided to people for life is vital to our communities. In the last few decades, due to a lack of investment in new social housing, it is only those most in need and those most vulnerable who have been housed. Historically social housing was for all of those on low and modest incomes and contributed to social cohesion. The government is now peddling a myth that social housing is subsidised. It is not; most council properties are paid for within a few years of being let and a substantial portion of all rent has gone to develop new social housing. These current attacks on social housing will mean less money being reinvested in housing. The market rents of payers to stay will go straight in to the coffers of the Treasury in order to reduce the national debt.

The prices of properties for sale put them beyond the reach of people on both low and modest incomes and largely speaking, people living now in social housing and those living in it in the future will not be able to buy and will not be able to easily afford market rents. It has been calculated that "Pay to Stay" alone will put a minimum of 60,000 households over the poverty threshold. Ironically one of the only ways of avoiding "Pay to Stay" may be for a household or family member to turn down overtime or even stop working altogether, just to keep a roof over their head.

Conference believes that the government's latest legislation, as outlined above, will not resolve the already existing housing crisis and will in fact worsen it. Already an increasing number of our members are suffering high rents in sub-standard private rented accommodation and having to commute long distances because there is no alternative. The effects of these latest attacks will be to seriously damage the quality of life of many more of our members. Workers with low and moderate incomes will now find it almost impossible to afford a decent home close to where they work. Any improvements in pay and conditions won by UNISON and other unions will be swallowed up by housing and travel costs. Housing is now a workplace issue and one on which the whole of the labour movement needs to vigorously campaign

Conference agrees that UNISON should work with the Labour Link and call on a future Labour Government to:

- a) Invest in social housing and specifically council housing for life at a genuinely affordable social rent. Conference agrees with Jeremy Corbyn Labour leader

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“There is no answer to this housing crisis that doesn’t start with a new, very large, very active council house building project”;

- b) Reverse the Housing and Planning Bill/Act, 2016, and instead promote social housing as a main part of the solution to the housing crisis;
- c) Introduce rent controls to ensure that all housing, both social and private, is affordable for working people and those on benefits.

Furthermore, Conference agrees to campaign for the following:

- i) The building of social housing, including a mass programme of council housing, with truly affordable social rents and based on secure tenancies;
- ii) To support campaigns against the Housing and Planning Bill or Act and to work with other unions and tenant organisations to oppose the legislation and campaign for a better deal for tenants, including the Kill the Housing Bill Campaign and Defend Council Housing;
- iii) For councils to use all possible means to oppose the legislation and the forcing of market rents on to tenants. In the same way that some councils agreed not to evict tenants who were in arrears over the bedroom tax, Conference calls on councils and housing associations to work and actively campaign with trade unions, tenants and housing groups, not to evict tenants who fall into arrears as a direct result of the Housing and Planning Bill/Act.

Islington

Defend Social Housing

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The Conservative government is launching an all-out attack on the provision of social housing, the outcome of which will be to effectively end it. Legislation currently being introduced through parliament entails the following:

- 1) The phasing out of lifetime secure tenancies for Council tenants. Although this will not apply to those who already have a secure tenancy, in future those provided with council housing will be only offered tenancy contracts of between two and five years. At the end of this period, there will be a review of housing need at that time and it could be deemed that a family or individual is able to then rent in the private market or be moved to different social housing that is considered appropriate;
- 2) For existing tenants, the introduction of the pernicious and so-called “Pay to stay” provision families or individuals with house hold incomes of £40,000 plus in London and £30,000 plus outside of London, forced either to either buy their property, move, or pay a market rent for it; otherwise they will be evicted. The legislation will affect people on modest and low incomes, couples earning approximately £20,000 a year each in London and £15,000 a year outside of it will find themselves affected. In using the term “market rent”, the government appears to mean the average market rent for the area. This means that in London and certain other parts of England and Wales, but particularly in the

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south of England, people will be forced to pay rents which will in many cases exceed their actual incomes;

- 3) Forcing local authorities to sell properties which are deemed to be of “high value” as they become vacant, thus diminishing even further the supply of housing for those in need. In some cases it may be that properties currently being built will have to be sold on the open market even before there is a chance to let them;
- 4) Extension of the Right to Buy to Housing Association tenants, again further diminishing the supply of social housing. Having being introduced in the 1980's, one of the major achievements of Right to Buy is that many former council properties are now in the hands of private landlords who in many cases rent the properties at high market rents to people who need social housing and are on local authority waiting lists.

The government is obsessed with home ownership and supports renting only when it is through the private market. Yet its proposals for starter homes for people to buy are for many people a non-starter, with the cost of one of these homes in the Greater London set to be a staggering £450,000.

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Conference believes that the government's latest legislation, as outlined above, will not resolve the already existing housing crisis and will in fact worsen it. Already an increasing number of our members are suffering high rents in sub-standard private rented accommodation and having to commute long distances because there is no alternative. The effects of these latest attacks will be to seriously damage the quality of life of many more of our members. Workers with low and moderate incomes will now find it almost impossible to afford a decent home close to where they work. Any improvements in pay and conditions won by UNISON and other unions will be swallowed up by housing and travel costs. Housing is now a workplace issue and one on which the whole of the labour movement needs to vigorously campaign.

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- b) Reverse the Housing and Planning Bill/Act, 2016, and instead promote social housing as a main part of the solution to the housing crisis;
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- i) The building of social housing, including a mass programme of council housing, with truly affordable social rents and based on secure tenancies;
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Islington

Fighting The Trade Union Bill

Conference agrees the fight against the Trade Union Bill must continue regardless of whether it is amended in any favourable way during its passage into law via the House of Lords. It contains far too many blatant anti-union strands for it to be ignored simply because we lose the campaign to overturn the minds of politicians who are anti-union in the first place.

We must draw the lessons from our responses to a previous round of anti-union legislation in the 1980s, which failed to remove the laws from the statute book and, instead, allowed some in our movement to embrace them as somehow positive and ‘democratic’.

Clearly, if the Trade Union Bill is implemented unamended, UNISON has an immediate task to put in place provision for the recruitment of workers using direct debit as a replacement for DOCAS (deductions of contributions at source) as well as ensuring that adequate advice is circulated to all branches concerning other provisions around picketing etc.

2016 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

However, we need to organise a political response as well if our enemies seek to use the provisions of the bill to either criminalise trade unionists or sequester union funds. The National Executive Council is therefore instructed to immediately initiate a discussion both within the TUC and with all other public sector unions a proportionate response should there be punitive measures threatened against unions or individuals.

These discussions should include the consideration of organising strike action to defeat such attacks, and any other measures deemed necessary.

Knowsley

The Trade Union Act

Conference believes that the Trade Union Act shows that the Tories have declared war on the trade union movement. Cameron wants to shackle our unions with yet more anti trade union legislation despite Britain already having the having the most draconian anti-union laws in Western Europe.

Conference notes that proposed new legal thresholds for strike ballots requiring a 50 percent turn out in all ballots and 40% of all those eligible having to vote yes for strike action in essential services, including the fire service, will make it even more difficult for lawful strike action to take place. If these thresholds had applied in the general election, 270 of Tory MPs currently sitting in the House of Commons would not have been elected. The new legislation is being put forward by a government that has the support of only 24 percent of the electorate.

Conference further notes that the Act offers employers what amounts to a licence to break strikes. They want to make it legal for agency workers to replace strikers during industrial disputes.

Conference believes that with the restrictions on the right to picket, this is package aims at taking out the most powerful obstacle to the Tories' austerity plans. The limitations on the unions' right to fund political parties do not apply to billionaires that fund the Tories.

Conference further believes that the trade union movement cannot tolerate such an outrageous attack. The right to organise and take collective action are basic human rights. We cannot stand by and allow them to be destroyed.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 4) Work with other trade unions, campaign groups and the TUC to organise the biggest possible campaign of meetings, rallies and other action to defend the right to strike;
- 5) Initiate with other unions and the TUC a national demonstration for trade union rights;
- 6) Work with Labour Link to campaign for the next Labour government to repeal the Trade Union Act in full;

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- 7) Initiate a serious debate amongst our members on the issue of our union being prepared to break unjust anti-union laws if they are used against our movement.

London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority

Motion on General Secretary Election

Not printed

Portsmouth City

End Social Cleansing

Conference condemns the government's failure to address the growing housing crisis which is devastating the lives of hundreds of thousands of people across Britain. The end of the secure tenancies for social housing tenants, the loss of social housing through an extended Right to Buy scheme, the removal of controls to keep homes within the social housing sector, cuts to services to prevent and address homelessness, and the rapidly escalating cost of private renting, are all fuelling a dangerously overheated and unstable housing market.

Conference likewise condemns any local authority willing to engage in social cleansing through the eviction of tenants and the forced dispersal of working class communities from their homes, which are then replaced with luxury accommodation at exorbitant rents.

In Salford, for example, the experience of local communities is that the 'slum clearance' of the 1960's continues to have an impact. Some of the areas in the city which experience the persistent inequalities in health and high levels of deprivation which result in earlier death than other parts of Salford are those which experienced removals more than 50 years ago. We therefore recognise the longevity of housing policy on people and the devastating potential of unintended consequences.

Conference demands an end to this practice and calls on all Labour controlled councils to refuse planning permission and/or funding for any project which requires the demolition of existing homes unless the developer agrees to rehouse those tenants in the new development once complete, and on the same contractual terms, rent and service cost levels as before.

Salford City

Opposition to Further Local Government Cuts

Conference notes that:

- 1) English councils control £114 billion;
- 2) The combined budgets of the 58 Labour-led councils standing in the May elections come to £32.7 billion;
- 3) They hold around £4.5 billion in general fund reserves and another £1.36 billion in the housing revenue account and capital receipt reserves;

2016 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 4) This does not include the vast reserves held by Labour controlled councils in London;
- 5) That there is no legal impediment stopping Labour councils pooling reserves;
- 6) That local authorities have significant borrowing powers. This includes “prudential” borrowing (unsupported borrowing) alongside capital borrowing. Local authorities have and continue to use these powers;
- 7) That under the Localism Act, local authorities have a “power of competence” to do “anything apart from that which is prohibited”;
- 8) That even with the above procedural points, a campaign is needed to unite service users, communities and trade unions in a fight against the Tories to protect local government;
- 9) That the factors above show that councillors do in fact have options;
- 10) That the Unite Local Government NISC (the equivalent of the UNISON Local Government Service Group Executive) passed a motion on 7 January 2015 calling on councils to use reserves and prudential borrowing to set a "no cuts" budget.

Conference therefore calls for:

- a) Local authorities to set legal no cuts budgets, use reserves, capitalise eligible general fund expenditure and borrow prudentially to generate resources so that they need not make cuts;
- b) A national campaign, linking councils, trade unions and communities in a fight against the Tories austerity programme;
- c) UNISON’s Local Government Service Group Executive, National Executive Council, Labour Link and relevant committees to prepare a strategy to take the points in this motion forward.

Salford City

Opposition to Further Local Government Cuts

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- 1) English Councils control £114 billion;
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2016 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

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- b) A national campaign, linking councils, trade unions and communities in a fight against the Tories austerity programme;
- c) UNISON’s Local Government Service Group Executive, National Executive Council, Labour Link and relevant committees to prepare a strategy to take the points in this motion forward.

Salford City

Public Spending Cuts

Conference condemns the Government’s attacks on the public sector and welfare state.

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.

2016 National Delegate Conference

UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

South Derbyshire Healthcare

No to the EU - Yes to Workers' Rights

Conference notes the forthcoming EU Referendum and believes that UNISON should support the 'Leave' option on the ballot paper.

Many trade unionists may have supported EU membership because of some of the provisions of the Social Chapter and other pieces of progressive legislation. These are all under threat by the pursuit of Europe-wide austerity and the race to the bottom, as signified by judgements such as Viking and Laval.

Since 2008, the onset of the world financial and economic crisis has led to a number of EU countries pursuing bailouts from the EU and the European Central Bank, in conjunction with the international Monetary Fund. The EU's social provisions have meant little as the 'Troika' has imposed savage austerity on the workers of Greece, with mass unemployment, cuts to wages and pensions, increased taxes and a resulting catastrophic drop in living standards. Similar bailouts and austerity have been forced on workers in Ireland and other EU countries.

Further measures to attack workers' rights in the EU can be anticipated. The EU is, in the final analysis, a club for big business and their governments. The brutal attitude of EU and national leaders to the Greek workers, who voted magnificently against austerity in their referendum, shows how they would attack other workers in similar situations. This shows what could happen if a future left, anti-austerity government, perhaps led by Jeremy Corbyn, was prepared to stand up to the EU and its neo-liberal agenda.

The EU is also in talks with the USA over the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) treaty that would further strengthen the pro-privatisation agenda facing workers internationally.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Produce material for members explaining why we support a vote to 'leave' the EU;
- 2) Work with other unions with similar positions, to develop a trade union-based campaign for a 'leave' vote. However, we call on the union not to work with UKIP, the Tories or far-right organisations opposed to the EU but instead to participate in a genuine workers' campaign;
- 3) Strengthen our links with other European trade unions to launch a Europe-wide campaign against austerity whatever the outcome of the referendum;
- 4) Support the efforts of trade unionists in all EU countries to resist austerity, including legal strike action when called.

Ultimately, Conference believes that Europe-wide campaigns against austerity and for increased living standards can build support for a more socialist Europe based on workers' unity rather than the bosses' club of the EU. We call for an Exit Left.

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UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Surrey County

No cuts In Local Government

Conference notes that:

- 1) English Councils control £114 billion;
- 2) The combined budgets of the 58 labour – led Councils standing in the May elections come to £32.7 billion;
- 3) They hold around £4.5 billion in general fund reserves and another £1.36 billion in Housing revenue Account and capital receipt reserves;
- 4) This does not include the vast reserves held by Labour controlled Councils in London;
- 5) That there is no legal impediment stopping Labour Councils pooling reserves;
- 6) That local authorities have significant borrowing powers. This includes “Prudential” borrowing (unsupported borrowing) alongside capital borrowing. Local authorities have and continue to use these powers;
- 7) That under the Localism Act, local authorities have a “power of competence” to do “anything apart from that which is prohibited”;
- 8) That even with the above procedural points, a campaign is needed to unite service users, communities and trade unions in a fight against the Tories to protect local government;
- 9) That the factors above show that Councillors do in fact have options.

Conference therefore agrees:

- a) To call on Labour, Plaid Cymru and SNP Councils to set legal no cuts budgets, use reserves, capitalise eligible general fund expenditure and borrow prudentially to generate resources so that no labour Council need make cuts. These are short term measures to buy time to build a national campaign;
- b) That the financial measures must be combined with a national campaign, linking councils, trade unions and communities in a fight against the Tories' austerity programme;
- c) To call on the unions political officers/department to prepare a strategy to take the points in this motion forward.

Tees Esk and Wear Valleys Health

UNISON democracy and member participation

Not printed

Tower Hamlets

Housing Cuts

2016 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference condemns the government's failure to address the growing housing crisis which is devastating the lives of hundreds of thousands of people across Britain. The end of the secure tenancies for social housing tenants, the loss of social housing through an extended Right to Buy scheme, the removal of controls to keep homes within the social housing sector, cuts to services to prevent and address homelessness, and the rapidly escalating cost of private renting, are all fuelling a dangerously overheated and unstable housing market.

Conference likewise condemns and local authority willing to engage in social cleansing through the eviction of tenants and the forced dispersal of working class communities from their homes, which are then replaced with luxury accommodation at exorbitant rates.

UNISON demands an end to this practice and calls on Labour controlled councils to refuse planning permission and/ or funding for any project which requires the demolition of existing homes unless the developer agrees to rehouse those tenants in the new development once complete, and on the same contractual terms, rent and service cost levels as before.

Wolverhampton General

Participation in UNISON lay democracy

Not printed

West Sussex

Improving turnout in UNISON elections

Not printed

West Sussex

In breach of Rule D.2.11 Employment of Staff

UNISON Democracy

Not printed

Manchester

Role of staff in UNISON elections

Not printed

South West Yorkshire Partnership Health

In breach of the agreement on the political fund

Closing of UNISON Political Funds

Conference condemns the decision taken by the UNISON National Executive Council on 17th February 2016 to close down both union political funds and to submit a rule change to this effect at the 2016 National Delegate Conference.

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Conference notes that though it was a unanimous decision it was made without any consultation whatsoever with branches, regions, Labour Link structures or any other bodies within UNISON.

Conference also notes a proposal submitted to UNISON National Delegate Conference in 2015 to review the General Political Fund to widen involvement by regions in the structure of the GPF was ruled out of order by the Standing Orders Committee on the basis only the 12 members of the National Executive Council who sit on the National General Political Fund (as a sub committee with no regional or branch involvement) could make decisions in relation to the GPF.

Conference further notes that a whole host of motions relating to the work and operation of the Labour Link Affiliated Political Fund have been ruled out of order for many years on the grounds that only the Labour Link structure could make decisions relating to its structure and policies.

Conference notes this decision of the National Executive Council was taken even though the Trade Union Bill was at the time still being challenged line by line inside and outside Parliament.

Conference believes that consultation within the union could have helped to consider a range of responses in which UNISON could determine which course of action was in the best interests of the union and not as the National Executive Council did which was to run up a flag of surrender when the union was still fighting the Bill.

Conferences agrees there shall be a Special National Delegate Conference to be held within six months to determine options regarding UNISON's future political finances, structure and organisation and calls on the National Executive Council to organise a consultation exercise throughout UNISON prior to the Special Conference.

Manchester

A Campaigning Strategy To Win £10 Minimum Wage Now

Conference welcomes the passing of Composite B Campaigning for a Living Wage at Conference in Glasgow 2015. It is now UNISON official policy to "Campaign with the TUC, with other trade unions and alongside other appropriate campaigning organisations in building a united push toward minimum pay rates of £10 per hour".

The demand for a £10ph minimum wage should be seen as one of the most important campaigning issues for UNISON over the coming months. We believe that thousands of public sector workers, in particular but not exclusively young workers, can be inspired to join a trade union and get active in a campaign for a raise in the minimum wage. "£10 Now" is an idea whose time has come.

We believe that "£10 Now" should not just be an 'aspiration' but can be turned into a reality. As in the USA with the "\$15 Now" campaign, once this idea gets picked up by low paid workers, young people and communities, local authorities and other public sector employers can be forced into raising their minimum wage. In particular, given the current UNISON link to the Labour Party, we should be demanding that Labour-controlled councils implement a £10ph minimum wage.

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Conference believes we need a real, concrete, campaigning and negotiating strategy in to take this campaign forward and calls upon the National Executive Council to develop a strategy including (but not limited to):

- 1) Earmarking resources for this campaign, including finance, materials and personnel;
- 2) Consideration of bids for available finance towards developing this campaign;
- 3) A press and publicity strategy;
- 4) A negotiating strategy to achieve "£10 Now", for those employers where we have collective bargaining rights – 'always seeking appropriate pay rises higher up grading scales to maintain equality proofed pay systems based on equal pay for work of equal value';
- 5) A campaigning strategy, with materials, website and social media resources specifically on "£10 Now";
- 6) Consider organising or supporting a national event such as a march or festival organised around the "£10 Now" demand;
- 7) A list of 'target' employers where we can concentrate organising and campaigning - any employers where we have collective bargaining, community and private-sector employers and any other employer where we may be able to win this demand;
- 8) A motion to the TUC calling for national cross-union support for the campaign;
- 9) Active support for those campaigning organisations already working to achieve a £10ph minimum wage such as the Fast Food Rights Campaign and Youth Fight For Jobs;
- 10) UNISON nationally to affiliate to Youth Fight For Jobs and encourage regions and branches to affiliate and invite speakers;
- 11) Work with the Service Groups, Young Members, Self Organised Groups and the Labour Link to take this campaign forward;
- 12) Consider inviting a representative from the successful "\$15 Now" campaign in Seattle to visit the UK in 2016 for a UNISON speaking tour.

Conference believes that, by adopting such a robust and forward-looking strategy, we can recruit, organise and mobilise new layers of workers and young people.

We also believe that if we can win "£10 Now" in just a few employers this could be a spark that ignites the imagination of workers across the UK and may just light the fire under this weak Tory government.

South East Region

Not in line with SOC procedures

2016 National Delegate Conference

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Mental Health

Conference welcomes the emerging party-political consensus around the importance of parity of esteem for people suffering from mental illness. We believe that any stigmatisation of people with mental illness is always wrong and must be challenged.

Conference recognises that Conservative and Liberal Democrat politicians support for better mental health services is merely rhetoric. While in coalition their government was responsible for severe cuts to mental health services across the country. This resulted in service users losing vital support and patients being sent miles from their homes in search of a critical bed. These savage attacks have continued under the current Tory administration. Mental health trusts in England had their budgets cut by more than 8% in real terms over the last Parliament, and Conference condemns these and the further cuts which will hit mental health services in the coming year.

Conference notes the growing demands on mental health services. Referrals have increased by almost 20% from 2010 to 2015. Although some of this increase may be due to greater openness around mental health conditions, which is to be welcomed, Conference believes that this rapid increase is a direct consequence of the government's austerity policies.

Austerity policies make our society less conducive to mental well-being. The group 'Psychologists Against Austerity' (PAA) have identified five 'austerity ailments': humiliation and shame, isolation and loneliness, fear and mistrust, instability and insecurity, and feeling trapped and powerless. All these have a damaging impact on our mental health and all are linked to austerity policies by PAA.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Support the call for parity of esteem for mental health and work to eradicate any stigmatisation and discrimination of people who suffer from mental illness;
- 2) Prioritise the campaigning against cuts to mental health funding and highlighting the impact the cuts are having on service users and our communities;
- 3) Step up our campaign against austerity policies and highlight how public service cuts and worsening employment conditions are detrimental to mental health through making people feel more isolated and insecure;
- 4) Call on branches to negotiate with their employers to provide mental health support for their employees;
- 5) To look at organising a conference on the crisis in mental health with other bodies campaigning around mental health.

North West Region

Welfare not Warfare

Conference notes:

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- 1) That Local Government is the greatest casualty of Chancellor George Osborne's austerity budgets, with year on year cuts that will decimate the employment of UNISON members and services to local people;
- 2) That huge resources are being poured into armaments and conflict.

Local government has been the largest casualty of the Conservative government's most recent austerity budget, compounding year on-year cuts that have devastated the employment of UNISON members and the services they provide for local people. Between 2010 and 2015 local government has lost £18 billion of funding in real terms, with councils in more deprived areas bearing the greatest share of these cuts. The most deprived all-purpose authorities saw cuts of more than £220 per head compared with under £40 per head for the least deprived.

These cuts have been imposed while the government has also committed the United Kingdom to replacing the Trident nuclear deterrent system with a similar permanent-at-sea submarine based system. The cost of this new system is estimated at £25 billion, rising to a total running cost of £167 billion over the 32 years of its expected operation.

Furthermore, the Conservative government has recently committed the UK to joining the air campaign against ISIS/Daesh in Syria. The government has provided no time frame for how long it expects the UK to be involved in this campaign or what a successful resolution to it will be.

Conference believes that unnecessary defence spending and wars of choice are an act of theft from those most at need. Both the renewal of Trident and continued involvement in conflict in the Middle-East cannot be justified in the context of the scale of cuts imposed on other vital areas of government spending.

Conference believes that scarce resources should instead be prioritised on services that the public actually use - social services, elderly care, libraries, social housing, waste management and all the other local services that our people rely upon. This rather than a nuclear deterrent that will never be used and is not truly independent, or on air strikes that recent history has shown will recruit more to the banner of Isis/Daesh and will leave the UK less safe than it was before.

Conference believes:

- a) That UNISON should oppose both the renewal of Trident and the idea of more British involvement in the wars in the Middle East on the basis of cost;
- b) That if there is indeed a problem with the budget deficit or a shortage of money in the Treasury, then what resources are available would be better spent on social services, elderly care, libraries, social housing, waste management and all the other local services the public rely on; not a weapons system that can never be used, or a war that will only foster more terror.

Conference resolves to encourage branches to pass similar motions to:

- i) Affiliate to Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) and Stop the War locally;

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- ii) Take action against British military entanglement in the Middle East by drawing attention to the unacceptable costs of these wars;
- iii) Oppose the renewal of the Trident nuclear deterrent on the grounds of its inflated cost.

South West Region

Not sufficiently clear

Anti Trade Union Bill Campaign

Conference believes that the Trade Union Bill is the Anti Trade Union Bill. It is a direct attack on workers' right to join a union and to be represented in negotiations over pay, working hours, holiday leave, sickness cover, pensions, and workplace conditions.

This Bill would require your branch officers to submit regular reports to a new government regulator on how they represent you. Failure to provide this information on time would result in the officers being fined between £2,000 and £20,000.

This Bill would legitimise black listing allowing the new government regulator to pass your personal details on to third parties such as private sector employers and employment agencies.

This Bill lays down draconian requirements for industrial action ballots and allows employers to bring in agency staff to replace existing staff where there is a workplace dispute.

This Bill would also allow the relevant UK government minister to monitor and require an explanation from public sector employers like Aberdeenshire Council as to why they are spending time meeting and negotiating with you and your workplace representatives.

Councils across the UK in response to the campaigning by trade unions and their members have condemned the Anti Trade Union Bill. The Scottish Government and Welsh Assembly have condemned the Anti Trade Union Bill. However the UK Government is still trying to push through this Bill and the assistance of every trade union member is still needed to campaign against it.

Conference calls on all the members to take part in the campaigning to persuade the UK Government not to continue legislating for the Anti-Trade Union Bill.

Conference calls on UNISON to use all the negotiating and bargaining machinery available to us to lobby within councils, Local Government Association, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, the Welsh Assembly, Scottish Government and the UK Parliament to press for the Anti Trade Union Bill not to be enacted.

Aberdeenshire

The Right of Branches to a Guaranteed Level of Income - based on a capitation formula

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Conference notes that since being instructed by motion 116 passed at National Delegate Conference in 2011, the National Executive Council has been unable to devise an alternative funding formula that it has the confidence to put to Conference.

Delegates have been 'reassured' in the numerous presentations made on behalf of the National Executive Council to Conferences and to regions that 'the level of branch funding as a percentage of the union's income will not be reduced'. However, it is now clear to Conference that whilst the level of branch funding on aggregate would not be reduced, there is no assurance that any individual branch's income (or retained percentage of its members' subscriptions) will be maintained.

On the contrary, it is clear that the National Executive Council envisages a system where the individual branch would have no 'right' to any income at all, and might indeed receive none at all.

Our current system is based on a capitation (per capita) formula where branch income is based on retaining a percentage of the total income from its members' subscriptions. The percentage is 'adjusted' in the light of defined 'difficulty' factors; number of employers, geographical spread etc, but every branch's income is 'automatic' and is a right under our rules.

The National Executive Council's Branch Resources Review is committed to only one possible future option; doing away with this 'automatic' capitation-based formula – or any revised, improved capitation-based formula - and replacing it with budget-based (sometimes called 'activity-based') funding.

Under budget-based funding, branch income would instead be exclusively dependent upon the 'approval' (or not) of the branch's budgeted plans by 'committees' and individuals who are not directly accountable to the members of the branch.

Under this scheme, regions would be provided with the total 'branch income' for all the branches in the region. Regional bodies such as the 'Finance, Development and Organising Committees would then allocate this 'pot' between the individual branches in the region, based entirely on whether they 'approved' the individual branch's budgeted plans for the year to come. Peter's branch might be robbed to pay Paula's if her budgeted plans were judged more deserving.

There was nothing in Motion 116 of 2011 that ruled out the possibility of improving or reforming the current capitation-based formula in order to remedy the undesirable outcomes noted in the motion.

However, it is clear that, almost from the outset, the National Executive Council has chosen to rule it out of consideration rather than to offer it as an option for Conference to consider.

Conference notes that:

UNISON is entirely funded – at national, regional and branch level - by "the members' money".

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- 1) All members are in branches, so a member-led union must allow branches considerable autonomy, including a guaranteed income;
- 2) Under the current capitation formula the members of a branch automatically retain a proportion of their subscription (it is called a branch 'retention');
- 3) Members, through their branches, have direct democratic control of this 'retained' part of their money, deciding on their priorities and allocating their resources accordingly.

Conference therefore believes these elements of a capitation-based branch funding formula are an integral and necessary feature of UNISON as a member-led union, and must be retained.

Conference notes that UNISON already has an effective secondary branch funding system, under which branches can obtain additional funding for planned activities by bidding for money from the 'Regional Pool'. This 'discretionary' funding system runs in parallel with our 'automatic' capitation-based branch funding formula. Conference should not be restricted to a choice between one system and the other – we need both.

Conference is concerned that a wholesale switch to budget-based funding would create more undesirable consequences than exist under current arrangements:

- a) Branches would have no certainty about future income streams and this will compromise their ability to plan ahead and e.g. enter into agreements with other branches;
- b) It would destroy the automatic incentive of branches to recruit, grow, or 'take on' struggling branches/sections;
- c) It would undermine the independence, initiative and self-reliance that we aspire to for our members and which are the feature of our best branches;
- d) It reduces the incentive of branches to "live within their means" and instead risks creating a 'dependency culture';
- e) It would divert valuable activist and staff time into the bureaucracy of 'pleading your case' for branch income;
- f) Replacing an objective fact-based funding formula with a funding system based on 'approval' of planned budgets would take us into the subjective realm of personal and/or political opinion and judgement, risking faulty or biased decision-making, favouritism, cronyism and 'trendiness';
- g) It is easy to see how this could extend to the 'political' control over the autonomy of branches to carry out their democratically-selected activities – even where these have widespread democratic and active support within the branch.

Conference therefore instructs the National Executive Council, within the Branch Resources Review, to develop and to present to Conference proposals that:

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- i) Include a revised capitation based formula that would determine the greater part of the income of all individual branches (and of branches 'on aggregate');
- ii) Maintain the right of all branches, under UNISON rules, to a guaranteed income based on an automatic link to the branch's members' subscriptions;
- iii) Reinforce UNISON's status as a member-led union by ensuring that members retain, as branch income, the necessary resources to carry out the priorities that they determine democratically within the branch, but which might also include proposals to further develop and extend the secondary funding source currently provided by the Regional Pools.

Eastern Region

The Right to Branch Funding - retention of an 'automatic' capitation formula

Conference notes that since being instructed by motion 116 passed at National Delegates Conference in 2011, the National Executive Council has, until now, been unable to devise an alternative funding formula that it has had the confidence to put as a motion to Conference.

Delegates have been 'reassured' in the numerous presentations made on behalf of the National Executive Council to Conferences and to regions that 'the level of branch funding as a percentage of the union's income will not be reduced'. However, it is now clear to Conference that whilst the level of branch Funding on aggregate would not be reduced, there is no assurance that any individual branch's income (or retained percentage of its members' subscriptions) will be maintained.

On the contrary, it appears that the National Executive Council envisages a system where the individual branch would have no 'right' to any income at all, and might conceivably indeed receive none at all.

Our current system is based on a capitation (per capita) formula where branch income is based on retaining a percentage of the total income from its members' subscriptions. The percentage is 'adjusted' in the light of defined 'difficulty' factors; number of employers, geographical spread etc, but every branch's income is 'automatic' and is a right under our rules.

The National Executive Council's Branch Resources Review appears committed to only one possible eventual outcome; doing away with this 'automatic' capitation-based formula – or any revised, improved capitation-based formula - and replacing it with budget-based (sometimes called 'activity-based') funding.

Under budget-based funding, branch income would instead be dependent upon the 'approval' (or not) of the branch's budgeted plans by 'committees' and individuals who are not directly accountable to the members of the branch.

Under this scheme, regions would be provided with the total 'Branch income' for all the branches in the region. Regional bodies such as the 'Finance, Development and Organising Committees would then allocate this 'pot' between the individual branches in the region, based entirely on whether they 'approved' the individual

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branch's budgeted plans for the year to come. Peter's Branch might be robbed to pay Paula's if her budgeted plans were judged more deserving.

This is not inevitable, there was nothing in Motion 116 approved by Conference 2011 that ruled out the possibility of improving or reforming the current capitation-based formula in order to remedy the undesirable outcomes noted in the motion.

However, it is clear that, almost from the outset, the National Executive Council has chosen to rule it out of consideration rather than to develop or reform it as an option for Conference to consider.

Conference notes that:

- 1) UNISON is entirely funded – at national, regional and branch level - by “the members’ money”;
- 2) All members are in branches, so a member-led union must allow branches considerable autonomy, including a guaranteed income;
- 3) Under the current capitation formula the members of a branch automatically retain a proportion of their subscription (it is called a branch ‘retention’) ;
- 4) Members, through their branches, have direct democratic control of this ‘retained’ part of their money, deciding on their priorities and allocating their resources accordingly.

Conference therefore believes these elements of a capitation-based branch funding formula are an integral and necessary feature of UNISON as a member-led union, and must be retained.

Conference notes that UNISON already has an effective secondary branch funding system, under which branches can obtain additional funding for planned activities by bidding for money from the ‘Regional Pool’. This ‘discretionary’ funding system runs in parallel with our ‘automatic’ capitation-based branch funding formula. Conference should not be restricted to a choice between one system and the other – we need both.

Conference is concerned that a wholesale switch to budget-based funding instead of a capitation formula would lead to a poorer ‘business model’ whilst also undermining the member-led and democratic status of our union:

- a) Branches would have no certainty about future income streams and this will compromise their ability to plan ahead and e.g. enter into agreements with other branches;
- b) It would destroy the automatic incentive of branches to recruit, grow, or ‘take on’ struggling branches/sections;
- c) It would undermine the independence, initiative and self-reliance that we aspire to for our members and which are the feature of our best branches;

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- d) It reduces the incentive of branches to “live within their means” and instead risks creating a ‘dependency culture’;
- e) It would divert valuable activist and staff time into the bureaucracy of ‘pleading your case’ for branch income;
- f) Replacing an objective fact-based funding formula with a funding system based on ‘approval’ of planned budgets would take us into the subjective realm of personal and/or political opinion and judgement, risking faulty or biased decision-making, favouritism, cronyism and ‘trendiness’;
- g) It is easy to see how this could extend to the ‘political’ control over the autonomy of branches to carry out their democratically-selected activities – even where these have widespread democratic and active support within the branch.

Conference therefore instructs the National Executive Council, possibly within the Branch Resources Review, to develop and to present to Conference proposals that:

- i) Include a revised capitation-based formula that would determine the greater part of the income of all individual branches (and of branches ‘on aggregate’);
- ii) Maintain the right of all branches, under UNISON rules, to a guaranteed income based on an automatic link to the branch’s members’ subscriptions;
- iii) Reinforce UNISON’s status as a member-led union by ensuring that members retain, as branch income, the necessary resources to carry out the priorities that they determine democratically within the branch, but which might also include proposals to further develop and extend the secondary funding source currently provided by the Regional Pools.

Norfolk and Norwich Acute Hospitals

No to Tax Avoidance and Debt Encouragement Schemes from our Employers

Conference notes that UNISON national policy advocates a fair, progressive tax system in order to adequately fund public services and reduce inequality. UNISON opposes tax avoidance and evasion since it robs the public sector of much needed resources.

Conference notes with concern that some public sector employers, including Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, have introduced schemes entitled ‘Salary Sacrifice’ that offer to sell goods and services, often at inflated prices, without any credit checks, with the incentive that the individual employee pays for these goods by reducing their salary and therefore avoids paying as much tax. Such schemes are being promoted by employers because they also avoid paying the tax on workers full salaries and instead pay a lower tax on the reduced salaries.

Conference further notes with concern that by encouraging workers to have goods and services through such schemes they adversely impact upon workers future pensions and possible redundancy payments. These costs to workers are not really explained nor highlighted sufficiently before individuals make calculations on purchasing through ‘salary sacrifice’ schemes.

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Conference is extremely concerned that employers are encouraging employees to purchase goods without any credit checks and are therefore encouraging debt which may be deemed irresponsible by private lenders. For example, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council will allow individuals to borrow to such levels that they only earn the minimum wage.

Conference therefore resolves to:

- 1) Campaign against schemes by employers that encourage unregulated debt and help employers avoid paying their full taxes;
- 2) Demand employers adequately highlight the full costs of purchasing through such schemes by providing information on the adverse impact upon any pension entitlement and any possible future redundancy payment before goods are purchased;
- 3) Calls upon all public sector employers not to use such schemes;
- 4) To ask Labour Link to pursue a policy of opposing such tax avoidance schemes;
- 5) To write to all Council Leaders and Hospitals pointing out UNISON's opposition to such schemes whilst at the same time requesting details of how much tax has been avoided by any such schemes;
- 6) To conduct a members survey where such schemes operate to ascertain the following:
 - a) Whether members are aware of the adverse impact upon their pension by using such a scheme?
 - b) Whether members are aware of the adverse impact upon their future redundancy payments by using such a scheme?
 - c) Whether they have purchased goods or services through a 'salary sacrifice' scheme?

Sandwell General

No to Tax Avoidance and Debt Encouragement Schemes from our Employers

Conference notes that UNISON national policy advocates a fair, progressive tax system in order to adequately fund public services and reduce inequality. UNISON opposes tax avoidance and evasion since it robs the public sector of much needed resources.

Conference notes with concern that some public sector employers, including Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, have introduced schemes entitled 'Salary Sacrifice' that offer to sell goods and services, often at inflated prices, without any credit checks, with the incentive that the individual employee pays for these goods by reducing their salary and therefore avoids paying as much tax. Such schemes are being promoted by employers because they also avoid paying the tax on workers full salaries and instead pay a lower tax on the reduced salaries.

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Conference further notes with concern that by encouraging workers to have goods and services through such schemes they adversely impact upon workers future pensions and possible redundancy payments. These costs to workers are not really explained nor highlighted sufficiently before individuals make calculations on purchasing through 'salary sacrifice' schemes.

Conference is extremely concerned that employers are encouraging employees to purchase goods without any credit checks and are therefore encouraging debt which may be deemed irresponsible by private lenders. For example, Sandwell MBC will allow individuals to borrow to such levels that they only earn the minimum wage.

Conference therefore resolves to request that the National Executive Council:

- 1) Campaign against schemes by employers that encourage unregulated debt and help employers avoid paying their full taxes;
- 2) Demand employers adequately highlight the full costs of purchasing through such schemes by providing information on the adverse impact upon any pension entitlement and any possible future redundancy payment before goods are purchased;
- 3) Call upon all public sector employers not to use such schemes;
- 4) Asks Labour Link to pursue a policy of opposing such tax avoidance schemes;
- 5) Writes to all council leaders and hospitals pointing out UNISON's opposition to such schemes whilst at the same time requesting details of how much tax has been avoided by any such schemes;
- 6) Conducts a members survey where such schemes operate to ascertain the following;-
 - a) Whether members are aware of the adverse impact upon their pension by using such a scheme?
 - b) Whether members are aware of the adverse impact upon their future redundancy payments by using such a scheme?
 - c) Whether they have purchased goods or services through a 'salary sacrifice' scheme?

West Midlands Region

Received twice

Retired members to fill some Branch Officer posts

The 2015 Retired Members Conference carried an amended Motion 27, submitted by Cymru/Wales Region, proposing that a review of Rule C2.6.3 be carried out by the National Executive Council with a view to creating opportunities for retired members to put themselves forward for election to those offices of the branch which are not involved in the pay and conditions of working members standing for such

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offices. In view of this, and restrictions in facility time being experienced by branches, Conference calls on the National Executive Council, in liaison with the National Retired Members' Committee, to explore ways by which retired members might help fill the possible gaps at branch level.

East Sussex Area

Climate Change and Trade Union Action

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 causing rises in sea levels that threaten 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.

Conference notes the agreement at the COP21 summit in Paris in December that the world must take steps to limit global warming to 2 degrees and preferably 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels in order to halt catastrophic climate change. However we also note the failure of the summit to agree enforceable actions on governments to ensure this is achieved.

Conference supports calls for climate justice where those communities most at risk from rising sea levels, the loss of fresh water supplies and the degradation of their arable land should be supported in responding to the crisis. This includes financial support and support for refugees who will flee from the disaster confronting them.

Conference also recognises that climate justice requires support for those workers in the carbon industries whose jobs will be phased out as the world moves to a non-carbon based economy. This requires a transition plan to be drawn up to ensure alternative employment for these workers and the communities who currently rely on the carbon based industries.

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

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- 1) Continue to work with broad alliances, such as Stop Climate Chaos Scotland;
- 2) Explore how best to withdraw support for carbon extractive industries such as divestment by pension and public funds;
- 3) Oppose the development of fracking and unconventional gas extraction methods;
- 4) Support investment in "Green infrastructure" including improved public transport and cycle and walking infrastructure;
- 5) Support legislation to ensure homes are insulated and warm.

South Lanarkshire

Requiring a rule change

Self Organised Groups Conferences - Retired Members Representatives

Leicester and Islington are seeking to amend the rules and are asking other branches to support it. Apparently they need 2/3rds majority to change the rules. We have been approached by Rosie McGregor, a member of the SW Retired Members' Committee, for support. The point has been made that the more branches that sign up to this motion, the more likely it is to be debated.

The motion for Conference is

Amendment to Rule D.6.8.

Add new sentence after the full stop to read:

"The National Retired Members' Organisation, in consultation with relevant Retired Members, may submit up to two motions or amendments to Standing Orders and up to two amendments to motions to each of the Self Organised Group Conferences, provided such motions do not affect the terms and conditions of members in employment."

Rule D.6.8. reads

"The National Executive Committee shall establish a Retired Members' National Committee composed of representatives of Regional Retired Members' Organisations which may hold an annual conference of retired members and may elect two representatives to attend the National Delegate Conference. The National Retired Members' Organisation may send two representatives of relevant retired members to each National Self Organised Group Conference, with right to speak but not vote."

Devon County

Fundamental Review of Subscription Banding

Conference believes the principle of fairness behind subscription Banding – that members pay according to their income – has served the union well since 1993.

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We note however that this is a system which assumes the great majority of members pay their subs through their wages and relies heavily on employers' payroll systems to make sure members are paying the correct rate.

We also note that a significant minority of current direct debit payers pay less than they should, often for innocent reasons as they don't think to notify the union when their pay goes up. The very narrow ranges of our current Banding system mean a member can go through 3 subscription bands simply as they progress up an incremental scale.

Given the proposed ban on public sector employers operating DOCAS schemes contained in the Trade Union Bill currently before Parliament Conference believes our 11 band system requires a fundamental review and that a much simpler system of perhaps 4 bands (e.g. up to £10,000, £10,000-£20,000, £20,000-£30,000 and £30,000+) should take its place.

We do not want the first discussion we have with a member who comes to the union with a problem to be 'what rate do you pay?' and for many of them 'how much do you owe?'

Conference also notes that for some groups of members on higher bands we already suffer from price competition from other unions, and that membership levels would suffer if these members saw increases in their subscription as a result of these changes.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to bring proposals to the 2017 Conference for a simplified Banding system which avoids significant increases in subscriptions.

South West Yorkshire Partnership Health

Rule Amendments Ruled Out of Order

Could place the union in legal jeopardy

Rule B General

Delete Rule B 4.5 and replace with:

"To undertake such other activities as may be determined by the union in accordance with these Rules."

Lambeth

Schedule C Elections

Delete Schedule C 7 and replace with new Schedule C 7:

"7 The National Executive Council shall have the power to determine any matter of procedure or organisation or administration of or relating to the election. With the exception of the election of the General Secretary, the National Executive Council shall have the power to determine the method of voting (whether to be by simple majority; by single transferable vote; by multi- transferable vote; or by some other

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system) provided that the person(s) securing the greatest number(s) of votes according to the system employed shall be the person(s) declared elected, so long as they are and remain eligible for election. The method of voting for the election of the General Secretary shall be by Single Transferable Vote."

Dorset County

Schedule C Elections

Delete Schedule C 7 and replace with:

"7.1 The National Executive Council shall have the power to determine any matter of procedure or organisation or administration of or relating to the election. With the exception of the election of the General Secretary, the National Executive Council shall have the power to determine the method of voting (whether to be by simple majority: by single transferable vote; by multi-transferable vote; or by some other system) provided that the person(s) securing the greatest number(s) of votes according to the system employed shall be the person(s) declared elected, so long as they are and remain eligible for election.

7.2 The method of voting for the election of the General Secretary shall be, as allowed under section 51, subsection 7 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, by Single Transferable Vote."

Lambeth

Schedule C Elections

Delete Schedule C.7 and replace with;

"7.1 The National Executive Council shall have the power to determine any matter of procedure or organisation or administration of or relating to the election. With the exception of the election of the General Secretary, the National Executive Council shall have the power to determine the method of voting (whether to be by simple majority: by single transferable vote; by multi-transferable vote; or by some other system) provided that the person(s) securing the greatest number(s) of votes according to the system employed shall be the person(s) declared elected, so long as they are and remain eligible for election.

7.2 The method of voting for the election of the General Secretary shall be by Single Transferable Vote."

Lambeth

Not competent

Rule C Retired Members

Replace Rule C 2.6.3 with the following:

"Retired Members shall be entitled to attend branch meetings and to vote on issues not relating to the pay and conditions of members in employment. They will be entitled to stand for office for and vote for any Branch Officer position except for the positions of Chairperson, Secretary and Young Members' Officer, unless (and this

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applies only to the positions of Chairperson and Secretary) otherwise determined by the National Executive Council or as otherwise provided for in these rules.”.

Replace Section 11.3.1.1 of the UNISON Code of Good Branch Practice with the following Section 11.3.1.1:

“RETIRED MEMBERS AS BRANCH OFFICERS

The retired members in the branch have the right to elect a retired members’ secretary (rule D 6.3) annually. The secretary may attend and speak at normal meetings of the branch committee and can vote on any issue other than those which are concerned with the pay and conditions of work.

It is important that UNISON remains a vibrant union by encouraging new members to become active in all aspects of the union – bringing a fresh perspective and approach. At the same time, it is recognised that retired members take with them a great deal of valuable experience and sometimes have time to assist the branch in many ways and not just as recruiters or helping with administrative tasks. A member taking early retirement on grounds of disability, for example, may wish to continue to make a valuable contribution within a branch or regional disabled members’ group, as a member of the National Disabled Members’ Committee or as a delegate to the National Disabled Members’ Conference.

In recognition of the above, UNISON rule C 2.6.3 allows retired members to stand for any positions within the branch, except for the positions of Chairperson, Secretary and Young Members’ Officer, unless otherwise determined by the National Executive Council or otherwise provided for in the rules.

Where a disabled member wishes to hold office following retirement within disabled members’ self-organisation (as described above), the member may make application to do so by reference to the Protocol on “Early Retired” Disabled Members Applying to the National Executive Council Under Rule C 2.6.2”.

In any event, and especially for those posts normally barred to retired members, where branch officers are nearing retirement the branch committee should consider “succession planning” – what can be done to identify and encourage individuals to come forward and stand for election, to assist their development needs and to ensure a managed handover of responsibilities from the outgoing branch officer to the new.”.

and

Amend the National Executive Conference Protocol “Retired Members Seeking Permission From The NEC To Hold Office As Per Rule C.2.6.3.” as follows:

Replace paragraph 3 (which commences “However in accordance..”) of this Protocol with the following paragraph 3:

“However in accordance with UNISON’s objective of becoming an organising union, it must be stressed that Retired Members should only hold any of the posts of Branch Chairperson or Branch Secretary in exceptional circumstances. The following protocol is intended to facilitate this.”

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Basildon District Council

Not sufficiently clear

Rule D Retired Members' Organisation

Rule D 6.8

Add new sentence at end: "The National Retired Members' Organisation, in consultation with relevant Retired Members, may submit up to two motions or amendments to Standing Orders and up to two amendments to motions to each of the Self Organised Group Conferences, provided such motions or amendments do not affect the terms and conditions of members in full employment."

Islington

Rule C Full Membership

Insert new C 2.3.3.1

"2.3.3.1 Persons who are eligible for membership under rule C.2.3.3 are entitled to the rights and benefits of full membership whilst undertaking a course of training or study and for employment within the scope of Rule C.1 for the period of their studies."

Lanarkshire Health