



UNISON Conference Bulletin

January 2017

Water, Environment and Transport Conference 2017

Conference Team

020 7121 5123

This bulletin contains the timetable and information for
2017 Water, Environment and Transport Service Group Conference

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

**Water, Environment and Transport Service Group Conference 2017 will be held at
the Brighton Centre on Sunday 18 June 2017, commencing at 10am.**

The Brighton Centre
Kings Road
Brighton
East Sussex
BN1 2GR

Tel: 01273 290131 Fax: 01273 779980

Web: www.brightoncentre.co.uk

Timetable

Deadline for Submission of Motions	12noon	Tuesday 28 February 2017
Publication of Preliminary Agenda		Monday 20 March 2017
Deadline for Submission of Delegates	5.00pm	Friday 31 March 2017
Deadline for crèche places	5.00pm	Thursday 13 April 2017
Deadline for reasonable adjustment requests for access	5.00pm	Friday 21 April 2017
Deadline for Submission of Amendments	12noon	Tuesday 25 April 2017
Publication of Final Agenda		Monday 15 May 2017
Deadline for Emergency Motions	9.00am	Tuesday 13 June 2017
Deadline for submitting Change of Delegates online on the OCS	5.00pm	Wednesday 14 June 2017

Enclosed with this Conference Bulletin, and available for download on the conference webpage <https://www.unison.org.uk/events/2017-water-environment-and-transport-conference/> are:

Delegate Travel Form
Visitor Travel Form
Advice from Standing Orders Committee

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Key contacts:

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

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

Region	Contact	Tel	E-mail
Eastern	Amanda Tickner	01245 608909	a.tickner@unison.co.uk
East Midlands	Mark Ward	0115 847 5408	m.ward@unison.co.uk
	Colleen Forrest (Thurs & Fri only)	0115 847 5468	c.forrest@unison.co.uk
Greater London	Shelley Davey Lorraine Tant Cally Thompson	0207 535 6648	glrconference@unison.co.uk
Northern	Allison Jackson	0191 245 0805	a.jackson2@unison.co.uk
Northern Ireland	Elizabeth Robinson	02890 270190	e.robinson@unison.co.uk
North West	Kim Scott	0161 661 6777	k.scott@unison.co.uk
	Gillian Gorman	0161 661 6743	g.gorman@unison.co.uk
Scotland	Rosaleen Rodgers	0141 342 2816	r.rodgers@unison.co.uk
	Jean Fraser	0141 342 2880	j.fraser@unison.co.uk
South East	Catherine Still	01634 285708	c.still@unison.co.uk
	Kieran Pearson	01483 406510	k.pearson@unison.co.uk
South West	Jenn Gollings (Mon – Thurs only)	01823 285336	j.gollings@unison.co.uk
Cymru/Wales	Rosa Pickavance	01792 483910	r.pickavance@unison.co.uk
West Midlands	Claire Kenny	0121 685 3174	c.kenny@unison.co.uk
Yorkshire & Humberside	Joanne Turnbull	0113 218 2322	j.turnbull@unison.co.uk

Disenfranchised Branches

Branches are reminded that under Rule D.1.3.3.1 you will be disenfranchised from sending delegates to attend National Delegate Conference and Service Group Conferences for the remainder of the financial year following the year to which the financial return applies, if you did not submit your annual financial returns (Rule G.10.1) to your UNISON regional office by no later than **15 March each year**.

National and Regional Representation

The following bodies are eligible to send two delegates as long as they work in the water industry or Environment Agency or transport (at least one of whom should be female) who shall be entitled to speak but not vote:

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

Branch Representation

Each Water, Environment and Transport branch is entitled to **two delegates** for the first **250** members or part thereof, and **one additional delegate** for each additional **250** members or part thereof.

- i) In calculating the number of delegates a branch is entitled to send to the service group conference, the branch membership shall be based on members employed in the Water, Environment and Transport Service Group including employees of subsidiary/associate companies or organisations that have direct or indirect links with the main company or employing organisation.
- ii) All delegates must be employed in the Water, Environment and Transport Service Group including employees of subsidiary/associate companies or organisations that have direct or indirect links with the main company or employing organisation.
- iii) Where a branch has members covered by another service group, those members shall be discounted for the purpose of determining the size of the delegation and for the size of card votes.

Representation is based on membership details as at **30 September 2016**.

Fair Representation and Proportionality at the Water, Environment & Transport Conference

This will be applied in accordance with the Scheme of Branch Representation drawn up under Rule D.1.3, by the National Executive Council.

- 1) If the delegation only comprises one full delegate, then this delegate may be male or female.
- 2) The gender make up of the delegation must be based on the gender make up of the branch.

If a branch is unable to elect enough women delegates to meet proportionality, then the women's places on the delegation must remain unfilled. This is consistent with the approach to proportionality taken elsewhere in the union.

- 3) Branches with over 250 members must include one low paid woman member in the delegation.
- 4) Branches with over 500 members must include one young member in the delegation (i.e. Age 26 or under at end of conference).
- 5) Branches can send two people, in any gender combination, to share one of the delegate places. However:
 - a. If the entire delegation entitlement comprises of just the two sharers, then at least one must be female.
 - b. if they are sharing the low paid female seat, both sharers must be low paid females;
 - c. if they are sharing the young members' seat, both sharers must be young members.
i.e. sending one sharer to meet either the low paid or young member requirement is not sufficient.

When calculating proportionality, each sharer counts as one delegate.

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

It is appreciated that the size of the typical water environment and transport branch delegation may not be large enough to enable your branch to appoint a delegate in every category of membership envisaged by UNISON's national rules on proportionality and fair representation.

This may be especially the case in respect of low paid seats where many branches have achieved pay scales above the threshold. However the National Executive Council has confirmed that the principles of the national rules on proportionality and fair representation must be observed for all conference delegations. You may therefore want to make early contact with your Region to discuss your proposed delegation with a view to reaching agreement on its composition.

Transgender Members

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

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

Appeals

Any appeals concerning the composition of branch delegations shall be considered at regional level via a regional appeals panel convened by the regional secretary. Late delegate registrations will not be accepted. There will be no exceptions to this. The appeals mechanism in the regions is for the composition of delegations, not for late submissions. Regions have to apply the deadlines strictly.

Fitness to Attend Conference

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

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

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

Extras *IMPORTANT NEW INFORMATION*****

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

Please help us to help the environment

We're doing our best to reduce the environmental impact of our conferences. This year, we are providing all delegates with the chance to opt out of being sent paper copies of our conference materials as part of the delegates' despatch. All these documents will be available online via the conference app, and on the UNISON website. You can then download them onto your laptop or tablet to view online while you are at conference. If you wish to opt out please indicate this on the 'Extras' screen options on the Online Conference System (OCS). If you do not opt out, you will be sent all documentation in hard copy form.

Reasonable Adjustments

UNISON aims to provide a fully accessible event to disabled members in accordance with our duties under the Equality Act. Requests for reasonable adjustments must be submitted by **Friday 21 April 2017**.

For any reasonable adjustments required, please complete the request online by the stated deadline. Authorisation for personal assistance/facilitation is required from your Branch Secretary that this expenditure will be approved.

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

While we work within the context of the social model of disability this does not mean that UNISON can automatically provide all resources that are requested as adjustments. We have to consider the finite resources available both in terms of space and finances in order that we can balance our commitment to the social model with the resources available, and channel them to where they are needed most.

The process for managing requests that we adopted at 2016 National Delegate Conference has shown that with better information from members we can better address individual needs, allocate resources fairly, retain the ability to respond flexibly at conference and reduce the impact on other members.

Members requesting seating, tables, footrests, which impact on the space available on the floor of conference, will be asked what barriers they face that require this adjustment for their participation.

While not requesting detailed personal information, UNISON will require sufficient information in order to understand the barriers faced to get the right resources to the right people for this Conference. This will assist us in making adjustments that are meaningful and appropriate to the individual.

The union will determine the allocation of limited resources. If necessary, this may include reserving the right to seek additional information.

We will apply a necessary cut off point for requests, as close as possible to the conference while not impacting on the requirements to produce regional seating plans in good time for advance circulation. The deadline is **Friday 21 April 2017**. We will retain a limited ability to respond to unexpected circumstances that affect a delegate at short notice prior to the conference.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)

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

Crèche and Babysitting

Please note that crèche provision is available **for delegates only** for children up to the age of 16 years. Arrangements have been made for Nipperbout, the company contracted to provide crèche facilities at all UNISON national conferences, to provide babysitting. Should you require this service please complete the online request by **5pm, Thursday 13 April 2017**. Delegates are reminded that the cost for babysitting is borne by the branch so authorisation is required from your branch secretary that this expenditure will be approved.

Change of Delegate

Branches may change delegates up to the start of Conference. A member registering as a substitute branch delegate must have been eligible to represent the branch at the closing date for registration of delegates **Friday 31 March 2017**. Any changes must be in accordance with the Scheme of Branch Representation.

After **5.00pm Wednesday 14 June**, no more changes can be made on OCS. If a branch needs to make an emergency change to its delegation after this date then an Emergency Change of Delegate form will need to be completed.

This form will be available on the UNISON website from **Thursday 15 June** and will also be available from the conference desk at Brighton.

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

Important Travel Arrangements

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

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

Accommodation

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

<https://resweb.passkey.com/go/BUNDC2017>

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

Online Submission of Motions

Please refer to the advice from the Standing Orders Committee about submission of motions, enclosed with this Conference Bulletin. The Preliminary Agenda will be published on Monday 20 March 2017. The Final Agenda will be published online on Monday 15 May 2017.

Data Protection

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

UNISON Water, Environment & Transport Conference, Sunday 18 June 2017, Brighton Centre

DELEGATE RAIL TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM

Please read the guidelines overleaf before completing this form.

Delegate Name _____ A/C Code. 0-15-60-01

Branch Name _____ Branch No. _____

Branch Address _____

Additional Travellers

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Journey Details

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

Please tick the appropriate boxes

Ticket Type Single Return Flexible Fixed

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

Do you hold a Travel Discount Card? Y/N

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

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

Name _____	
Address _____	

Tel No. _____	E-mail _____

Listed below are contact details for STEWART CORPORATE TRAVEL:

Tel No: **0800 091 4272**

Fax: **0141 226 2960**

E-mail: unison@stewarttravelmanagement.com

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

GUIDELINES: DELEGATE RAIL TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM

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

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

**UNISON Water, Environment & Transport Conference,
Sunday 18 June 2017, Brighton Centre
DELEGATE AIR TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM**

Please read the guidelines overleaf before completing this form.

Delegate Name _____ A/C Code 0-15-60-01

Branch Name _____ Branch No _____

Branch Address _____

Additional Travellers

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Journey Details

OUTBOUND FLIGHT

DATE: _____ TIME OF FLIGHT: _____

JOURNEY FROM: _____ TO: _____

RETURN FLIGHT

DATE: _____ TIME OF FLIGHT: _____

JOURNEY FROM: _____ TO: _____

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

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

Name _____	
Address _____	

Tel No. _____	E-mail _____

Listed below are contact details for STEWART CORPORATE TRAVEL:

Tel No: **0800 091 4272** **Fax:** **0141 226 2960**

E-mail: unison@stewarttravelmanagement.com

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

UNISON Water, Environment & Transport Conference, Sunday 18 June 2017, Brighton Centre

VISITORS RAIL TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM

Please read the guidelines overleaf before completing this form.

Visitors Name _____

Branch Name _____ Branch No. _____

Branch Address _____

Additional Travellers

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Journey Details

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

Please tick the appropriate boxes

Ticket Type Single Return Flexible Fixed

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

Do you hold a Travel Discount Card? Y/N

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

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

Name	_____
Address	_____

Tel No.	_____
E-mail	_____

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3. Stewart Corporate Travel will invoice the Branch direct for all visitors travel. This travel will not be met from National Funds.
4. One form should be completed per Visitor.
5. Any children or personal assistants accompanying you should also be entered on your form in the spaces provided. Children must be under 16 years of age and their age indicated on the form.
6. If you are unsure of the time of travel please put the time you wish to travel and Stewart Corporate Travel will book the cheapest option available nearest to these times.
7. If you hold a Travel Discount Card such as the Young Persons/Student, Disabled or Elderly Card please advise Stewart Corporate Travel where indicated. Please note if doing this you will need to take the card with you when you travel.
8. Wherever possible, please ensure train tickets are delivered to you directly as collecting them from stations incurs an extra charge. Please ensure you enter your full address including the postcode in the box provided. This is the address your tickets will be delivered to.
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Sunday 18 June 2017, Brighton Centre
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Visitors Name _____

Branch Name _____ Branch No _____

Branch Address _____

Additional Travellers

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Child/Facilitator name _____ Child's Age _____

Journey Details

OUTBOUND FLIGHT

DATE : _____ TIME OF FLIGHT : _____

JOURNEY FROM: _____ TO: _____

RETURN FLIGHT

DATE: _____ TIME OF FLIGHT: _____

JOURNEY FROM: _____ TO: _____

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

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

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Glasgow G2 5AP



2017 Energy and Water, Environment & Transport Conferences

Guidance on Submitting Motions, Amendments and Emergency Motions and Composition of Branch Delegations

1 GENERAL

The procedures governing service group conferences are set out in UNISON Rules, mainly in Sections D and P.

It is the responsibility of the Business and Environment Standing Orders Committee (SOC) to ensure the union's Rules and standing orders relating to the business of the conference are observed (Rule P.2). This includes compiling the agenda.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with similar advice sent to branches regarding the National Delegate Conference.

2 SUBMITTING BODIES

Those entitled to submit motions and amendments - submitting bodies - are those bodies within the union which have the right under Rule P.1.3.5 to submit items for the agenda of a service group conference.

3 TIMETABLE AND SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

Conference Dates:

- WET Sunday 18 June 2017
- Energy Monday 19 June 2017

The timetable for the submission of motions and amendments is specified in the Rule Book (Rule D.1.9). The deadlines are as follows:

- Motions Tuesday 28th February 2017
- Amendments Tuesday 25th April 2017
- Emergency motions Tuesday 13th June 2017

It is helpful if items could be submitted as early as possible. Submitting bodies are advised not to schedule meetings too close to the deadlines.

4 ONLINE CONFERENCE SYSTEM

Motions and amendments are submitted via the Online Conference system (OCS). As well as supporting UNISON's environmental policy by moving away from a paper-based system, it provides transparency and accuracy in all submissions.

Using the OCS, motions/rule amendments can be authorised at branch level by either the branch secretary or chair. The other will receive email copies of the item as soon as it is submitted. At regional level, the regional secretary will be authorised to submit the item, with the regional convenor receiving an e-mail copy. The process is replicated at national level for national bodies and their relevant secretaries and chairs.

Other features within the OCS will make it easier to submit items that meet the agreed criteria as the submission will not be able to take place without supplying key data, such as the date of the meeting at which the motion was agreed, contact details, etc. All items will be time and date stamped by the system to ensure there is no dispute about the date and time of submission.

For 2017 all correspondence between the Standing Orders Committee and submitters will be via OCS and you will be advised of procedures at the appropriate time.

5 BEST PRACTICE ON WRITING MOTIONS AND AMENDMENT

When writing motions and amendments branches should:

- Write clear, succinct motions and amendments that include specific proposals for action
- Any quotations from other source documents must be identified with quotation marks
- Links to websites are not appropriate in motion text
- Wording should avoid language which may cause offence

Each motion and amendment is considered by the whole SOC and decisions are made collectively. General advice is available from SOC members on:

- Drafting motions and amendments, prior to deadlines
- Guidance and assistance on procedures and standing orders

However, receiving advice from individual committee members does not guarantee acceptance on to the agenda.

6 SUBJECT MATTER AND CITIZENSHIP ISSUES

All motions, amendments and emergency motions for the conference must be relevant to the service group. Motions may instruct the Service Group Executive but may not commit the union nationally to a particular policy or campaign. Motions that are relevant to the union as a whole should be sent to National Delegate Conference.

Some issues may be relevant to the service group, such as utility charges, may also be of relevance to the whole Union. These are called "citizenship issues". This is because members experience them not just as workers but also as members of the public. Such motions when submitted to National Delegate Conference can instruct the whole union to adopt a policy or campaign.

The same subject matter may be appropriate for debate at both a Service Group Conference and National Delegate Conference. However, a motion should only be debated in one arena, depending on its content, what action it calls for, and which part of the union can deliver that action.

A motion will be deemed a citizenship issue, and not admitted to a Service Group Conference agenda, if:

- i) It is beyond the remit of a service group
- ii) It is of relevance to the whole union
- iii) The outcomes can only be achieved by the union as a whole
- iv) It calls for action that only the whole union can act on

7 COMPETENCY OF MOTIONS

Branches are often disappointed when motions are ruled out of order by the SOC because of a technicality, for example the contents of the motion conflict with the Rule Book. The SOC members and officers are available to offer advice and assistance to branches in advance of the deadlines. They are also available to offer general guidance and assistance on procedures and standing orders.

8 AMENDMENTS

Amendments should not be used to promote essentially alternative motions, to negate a motion or be a substitute for voting against a motion. Amendments are likely to be ruled out of order (as wrecking amendments) if they:

- i) Introduce a direct negative into the motion
- ii) Reduce a motion to a restatement of existing policy
- iii) Change fundamentally the purposes of the motion

Branches cannot submit amendments to their own motions.

9 CALLS V INSTRUCTS

Branches should be aware that the SOC sees a distinction between motions that call on another body or part of the union to do something and one which instructs them. When using 'instruct' submitters of motions should be clear that service group conference does indeed have the power to instruct the body concerned, and in addition that the body being instructed has the power to undertake or ensure the action. Even when using 'call' or 'seek to ensure' submitters should still check that the Conference has the power to call on this body and the body has the power to undertake or ensure the action.

10 STAFFING

Motions which deal directly or indirectly with staffing matters will need to bear in mind that the National Executive Council and the General Secretary have responsibility for the employment and terms and conditions of UNISON staff, including legal obligations under employment law (Rules D 2.10.1 and D 2.10.2). As such the conditions of existing post holders cannot be changed or challenged by conference.

11 DEVOLUTION

In accordance with Rule P.1.3 the SOC can take into account the effect of a motion with regard to the national negotiating machinery of devolved administrations (in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland). The SOC can make recommendations to the conference to restrict voting to on such a motion to representatives covered by that machinery. Any such recommendation by the SOC has to be approved by the conference.

12 AFFILIATED POLITICAL FUND/LABOUR LINK

Issues that are internal to the functioning of matters affecting the Labour party, both in relation to internal issues and in respect of matters to be pursued at Labour party conference are dealt with by the Affiliated Political Fund (Labour Link), not the service group conference or the National Delegate Conference.

The SOC's approach is that motions which seek to give instruction or direction in relation to Labour Party matters are ruled out of order, while motions which ask, urge or call on are not.

13 "UNISON SPONSORED MPS"

The term 'UNISON sponsored MP' is inaccurate as it is illegal to 'sponsor' MPs to undertake advocacy. A motion or amendment which uses this term will be ruled out of order. Submitters of motions and amendments may refer to UNISON's parliamentary group of MPs or the relevant group in the devolved institutions or the European Parliament.

14 THE GOVERNMENT

Motions can be submitted on the policy or actions of the government and motions relating to UNISON's relationship with the coalition government. When using the phrase 'Labour', motions must be clear if they are referring to past or future Labour governments or the Labour Party.

15 INDUSTRIAL ACTION AND UNLAWFUL ACTION

The National Executive Council has exclusive power to authorise industrial action (Rule O). To be lawful, industrial action must relate to a trade dispute as defined by s.218 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. Motions calling for industrial action over privatisation or over 'the cuts' do not fall within the legal definition of a trade dispute and so must not be debated as this would put the union in legal jeopardy. Any motions relating to industrial action must not contravene Rule O which relates to industrial action or Rule B 4.5 which requires the union to act lawfully.

Motions or amendments must not describe previous or current disputes as being 'against privatisation' or similar such words, as this could leave the union open to legal challenge.

16 LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

The principle applied by the SOC is that the conference cannot compromise existing or potential legal proceedings for either party in a case. Proceedings include potential, past or current disciplinary issues.

If there is a possibility that a motion may prejudice proceedings, the SOC will seek legal advice. If the advice is that a motion either directly or indirectly refers or could lead to reference to a particular case either expressly or by implication, or if a decision at Conference could be used in a case by any party, the SOC will rule the motion out of order.

On some very limited occasions it may be necessary to rule a motion out of order not because of its content but because it would be impossible to debate the motion without the details of a particular legal case arising. For this reason, motions relating to equal pay will not be put on the agenda.

Motions that call on the union to break the law are not competent.

17 LEGAL ADVICE ON EQUAL PAY AND UNISON CONFERENCES

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

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

18 PENSION SCHEMES

Individual occupational pension schemes are normally debated as bargaining issues at service group conferences but there are circumstances where National Delegate Conference can debate general public sector pension policy and the finance and administration of the schemes without straying into individual bargaining issues. Submitters are reminded, if doing so, that the Local Government Pension Scheme has membership across more than one UNISON service group.

19 EMERGENCY MOTIONS

Motions and amendments not on the agenda (emergency motions and amendments) should be submitted in accordance with Rule P.11 (see paragraph 12 below).

The SOC will ensure the strict application of the criteria for submitting these items, to ensure that only matters of a real emergency to the service group are admitted on the agenda.

The same requirements apply to these items as for motions and amendments submitted within the normal deadlines, even those referring to events which take place after the deadline for emergency motions - normally 5 working days before the start of the conference (Rule P.11.2). The SOC will not take into account delegated powers within branches.

Attention is drawn to important criteria that will be taken into account by the SOC when deciding if an item constitutes an emergency - that the subject cannot be dealt with through other channels, rather than at the conference.

The emergency item must be considered by a meeting of the branch or branch committee, in accordance with the rules.

Branches that submit emergency items during conference will have to provide the SOC with details of their branch rules covering advance notice for convening meetings and branch quorum.

The branch will have to show:

- i) The matter couldn't be raised in debate on the agenda.
- ii) The action called for is not covered by another motion, amendment or composite.
- iii) The facts giving rise to the subject matter have occurred since the closing date for the submission of amendments to motions. It is not sufficient that the branch was not aware of the facts until after the closing date.
- iv) The subject cannot be dealt with through normal channels other than the conference.

The motion or amendment should be accompanied by an explanation for the reasons for the item not being submitted in accordance with the normal procedures and deadlines.

20 AMENDMENTS TO EMERGENCY MOTIONS

Amendments to emergency motions can be considered for admission to the agenda by the SOC. However, the same criteria that applies to the submission of emergency motions must be adhered to. Also, any amendments must meet the same criteria as other amendments submitted to the agenda.

21 UNISON RULES GOVERNING EMERGENCY MOTIONS

Standing Orders for Conferences Rule P.11 MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS NOT ON AGENDA

11.1 A motion or amendment which is not shown on the final agenda may not be considered by Conference without the prior approval of the Standing Orders Committee and the consent of Conference, which shall be governed by the following rules:

11.2 Such motion or amendment shall be in writing, signed by the Secretary and Chairperson of the branch or branches on whose behalf it is submitted and shall be sent to the Standing Orders Committee at least five working days before the commencement of Conference, except if it relates to events which take place thereafter. It will state at which meeting it was debated and adopted.

11.3 If the Standing Orders Committee gives its approval to the motion or amendment being considered, copies of the motion or amendment shall be made available for delegates at least one hour before conference is asked to decide whether to consent to the matter being considered.

11.4 An emergency motion will not be given priority over other motions and amendments on the agenda except where the Standing Orders Committee decide that the purpose of the motion in question would be frustrated if it were not dealt with at an earlier session of the conference.

11.5 An emergency motion will not be given priority over other motions and amendments on the agenda except where the Standing Orders Committee decide that the purpose of the motion in question would be frustrated if it were not dealt with at an earlier session of the Conference.

22 STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE 2017

Members

- Willie Docherty Energy
- John Fellows Energy
- Carol Wetherell..... Water, Environment & Transport
- Kevin Clarke Water, Environment & Transport
- Wendy Dunwell Water, Environment & Transport
- Jim Mansfield NDC SOC
- Karen Smales NDC SOC

Officers

- Julie Hallam SOC Secretary
- Stasoula Georgiou SOC Administrator

23 ROLE OF THE STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

The business and conduct of the conference is the responsibility of the Standing Orders Committee (SOC). It comprises 6 members, made up as follows:

- 2 each from the Energy and WET service groups
- 2 from the National Delegate Conference SOC

The composition of the SOC ensures it is an impartial body responsible only to the conference. It is serviced by a member of staff from the Business and Environment Section at UNISON Headquarters, and meets in the run up to the conference and at the conference itself.

The SOC is responsible for the preparation of the agenda, the order of business and ensuring that the motions and amendments are in order and in accordance with UNISON rules. It also ensures everyone is treated equally and fairly.

At the conference itself the SOC is responsible for the running of the conference business, decides whether or not emergency motions can be admitted to the agenda, and generally is available to anyone who wishes to raise questions about any aspect of the conference.

The chairperson of the SOC delivers regular reports from the SOC to the conference. These reports include such items as the proposed order of business, withdrawals and emergency motions.

24 BEFORE CONFERENCE STARTS

Occasionally, before the conference starts delegates may be asked to see the SOC. The SOC tries to help conference business by, for example:

- i) Composite Motions: Where there are several motions and amendments dealing with the same subject and following a similar line, the Committee may propose that a 'composite' motion be formulated and submitted. The composite can only use words from the original motions and amendments concerned. The delegates involved choose from among themselves someone who will move the composite.
- ii) Finalising the timetable: The Committee makes any last minute adjustments to the timetable in the light of any developments.

25 ADVICE

It is the responsibility of the submitting body to ensure that forms are properly completed and the criteria set out in this guidance note are met. If you need help or advice please contact a member of the SOC, or an SOC officer.

26 CHALLENGES TO SOC DECISIONS

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

Composition of Branch Delegations

27 SIZE OF BRANCH DELEGATIONS

Each Energy and WET branch is entitled to two delegates for the first 250 members or part thereof, and one additional delegate for each additional 250 members or part thereof.

In calculating the number of delegates a branch is entitled to send to the conference the branch membership is based on members employed in the Energy/WET service group including employees of subsidiary/associate companies or companies or organisations that have direct or indirect links with the main company or employing organization.

All delegates must be employed in the Energy/WET service group including employees of subsidiary/associate companies or organisations that have direct or indirect links with the main company or employing organisation.

Where a branch has members covered by another service group, those members shall be discounted for the purpose of determining the size of the delegation and the size of card votes.

Representation is based on membership as at 30 September 2016.

28 COMPOSITION OF BRANCH DELEGATIONS: PROPORTIONALITY AND FAIR REPRESENTATION

In 2009 the NEC introduced new arrangements governing the composition of conference delegations, concerning proportionality and fair representation.

UNISON's Rules (D 1.5) require that "the principles of proportionality and fair representation shall be observed in the election of delegates in accordance with guidelines drawn up by the National Executive Council."

All service groups must abide by the principles in the guidelines, within the context of the specific scheme of representation for each individual Group.

The principles as they apply to the Energy and WET service group conferences are set out in the Conference bulletin, but basically they are as follows:

- up to 250 members: 2 delegates based on gender make-up of branch
- between 251 and 500 members: 1 delegate based on gender make-up of branch
- over 500 members: 1 delegate, a low paid woman
- over 750 members: 1 delegate, a young member
- each subsequent 250 members: see Conference circular

Some branches have had difficulty in meeting the criteria. Set out are the steps they might take should they have problems with the composition of their delegations.

Should branches be unable to meet the criteria, and the composition of their delegation challenged, there is an appeals process in each UNISON region. For an appeal to succeed branches must demonstrate the steps they have taken to meet the requirements of proportionality and fair representation. By way of illustration, this would include:

- Letters, newsletters, e-mails etc inviting members to be part of the conference delegation
- Details of the gender and age composition of the branch/workforce
- Local pay rates
- Meetings seeking to recruit/identify delegates
- Steps taken to include: disabled members; lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members; black members; full-time and part-time members, manual and non-manual members; different occupations and skills
- Any other steps branches have taken to meet proportionality and fair representation in the composition of their conference delegations
- Any other relevant local circumstances

Your attention is drawn to the requirement that branches must include black members in their delegations in proportion to the workforce profile of the employers covered by the branch.

If your branch has problems meeting these criteria, it would be helpful when you submit your conference forms you include a covering letter explaining the steps you have taken to meet them, as illustrated above. This can be taken into account in the regional appeals process, should that be required.

UNISON
Business Community and Environment Section
130 Euston Road, London NW1 2AY
December 2016