

UNISON Energy Service Group Conference

Conference agenda and guide

19 June 2017

Brighton Centre



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Introduction by the General Secretary



Welcome to UNISON's Energy Service Group Conference 2017

Dear Delegate,

I wish you a very warm welcome to UNISON's 2017 annual Energy Service group Conference, especially if you are attending for the first time.

UNISON is proud to be a democratic union and our Energy Conference is the time when you the members set the policies and priorities of UNISON covering the service group.

Through collective strength in UNISON our members are defending themselves against attacks by employers and attacks by the government. In truth UNISON has never been so important for our members, the services they provide and the communities they work with.

The power of the union depends on the numbers of our members and the work of our activists. Without your commitment we could achieve nothing.

This booklet contains the Energy Conference papers, including the timetable, motions and amendments and conference standing orders.

I hope you will participate fully in all aspects of the conference and I wish you an enjoyable and productive time in Brighton.

Best wishes.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave Prentis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dave Prentis
General Secretary

Order of Business

Morning Session10.00 am to 12.30 pm
Afternoon Session 2 .00 pm to 5 pm

- 1 Opening remarks by Margaret McKee, UNISON Vice President and Chair of the conference
 - 2 Appointment of tellers
 - Alison Chisnall EDF Energy
 - Lucie Jones SSE England and Wales
 - 3 Report by the Standing Orders Committee
 - 4 Address by Jenny Middleton, Chair of the Energy Service Group Executive
 - 5 Guest Speaker: Dave Prentis, General Secretary
 - 6 Final Agenda
 - Energy Annual Report 2017 (in a separate booklet)
 - Motions and Amendments
 - 7 UNISON Rules and Standing Orders
 - 8 Quick Guide to Jargon
 - 9 Close of Conference
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Motions and Amendments

Section 1: Organising and Recruitment

Motion 1 **Energy Conference and Energy Branch Seminar**

Submitted by Scottish Electricity Branch

Amendment 1.1

Submitted by Yorkshire – Humberside Region

Motion 2 **Activist Learning and Development within Energy**

Submitted by North West Gas

Amendment 2.1

Submitted by Yorkshire Humberside Region

Motion 3 **Supporting Our Supporters**

Submitted by Western Energy

Section 2: Negotiating and Bargaining

Motion 4 **Changes to the way taxable benefits work through salary sacrifice schemes**

Submitted by North West Gas

Section 3: Campaigning

Motion 5 **Hydrogen Gas**

Submitted by Energy Service Group Executive

Motion 6 **Safe Driving**

Submitted by Energy Service Group Executive

Motion 7 **Call Centre Charters – How far have we come?**

Submitted by National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee

Section 4: Equalities

Motion 8 **Race Inequality in the workplace**

Submitted by National Black Members' Committee

Motion 9 **Workplace domestic abuse policies**

Submitted by National Women's Committee

Section 1: Organising and Recruitment

1. Energy Conference and Energy Branch Seminar

Conference notes the importance of the two main events in the Energy Service Group year – namely our Annual Conference and our Annual Branch Seminar. Both of these events are occasions of interaction and learning for our activists and also an occasion to recharge the batteries of our enthusiasm.

However, it has been noticeable over recent years that our Energy Conference is not as well attended as it could be and that there has been a decline in the amount of material on the agenda.

It has also been noticeable that the opposite is the case with the Branch Seminar which is always well attended and of great interest because of the many and varied topics up for discussion.

In the current economic climate and with the recent decrease in membership numbers it is not surprising that some branches may be finding it difficult to send adequate delegations to both events and that this results in some promising activists missing out on a great learning and networking opportunity.

Conference therefore instructs the National Service Group Executive to investigate the possibility of merging the Energy Conference and the Energy Branch Seminar in to one event over several days (in much the same way as the Police and Justice Service Group have successfully done for several years). This should be done keeping in mind the separate policy making nature of the Conference element.

Conference instructs the Energy Service Group Executive to report back to the 2018 conference with a view to putting the proposal into action by late 2019.

Scottish Electricity Branch

1.1

After “This should be done keeping in mind the separate policy making nature of the Conference element” add new sentence “This combined Conference and Seminar should be held at convenient locations rotating around the UK and at an appropriate time of year.”

Yorkshire - Humberside Region

2. Activist Learning and Development within Energy

Many lay activists have benefited over the years from specific utility linked training courses supported by UNISON's learning and Organising team. The most well known is the Negotiating Skills course for workers in a Utility setting. We have also had the opportunity in the past two years to do a specific pay bargaining course for senior lay activists in the Energy sector.

These national courses have been well received and make up for a significant deficit in Utility specific training in the regions largely down to numbers and scale. Many courses only have a particular public sector focus which is very different from the world in which Energy members work and therefore their needs are different and should be recognised as is the case today.

Conference is therefore concerned at changes which may significantly impact on the viability of the Utility specific training supported by LAOS. These changes concern the level of fee increase charged to branches which has increased from £80 per course per participant to a new fee of £125 per day per delegate.

This conference therefore calls on the Energy SGE:

To make further representation to LAOS to argue for additional Utility specific national activists training and that the fees are reconsidered.

To ensure that it is recognised that energy members contribute significantly to the financial income of the union and having access to some specific training should not be seen as an excess.

To continue to support capacity building amongst lay activists within the energy sector to help them be equipped with the rights skills to negotiate directly with leading industrial employers.

Ask that the Energy Service Group updates branches on progress on this important matter.

North West Gas

2.1

After "This Conference therefore calls on the Energy SGE:" add bullet points for all subsequent paragraphs.

After the 3rd bullet point insert new bullet point "To encourage and facilitate branches holding joint regional training events."

Yorkshire - Humberside Region

3. Supporting our Supporters

As the Energy Industry has changed from the "glory" days of privatisation to the very complicated structures we now have to organise within so too has the range of problems affecting our members and representatives.

The Energy Sector has faced major changes including the splitting off of the distribution businesses, company mergers, business diversification, the sell-off of established core businesses such as retail and contracting, outsourcing and off-shoring. Workers have been shifted from company to company and role to role with changing working conditions, new locations, different contract terms and increasing employment insecurity.

The rise of call centre operations has brought an obvious pressure for fast and efficient responses to customer enquiries with increasingly regimented ways of working, productivity targets and disciplinary procedures. The introduction of smart metering is bringing huge changes in the way meter fitting and reading is managed with many jobs being lost (as in meter reading) or having a limited duration (as in smart meter fixing).

These changes have completely transformed our working landscape and have greatly impacted upon the way we organise for representation and the actual role of our trade union representatives. Too often our representatives struggle to provide advice on complex issues, ongoing support to individual and group concerns, and the excellent representation of our members that we aim to feature in our front line response. We can sometimes place huge expectations on ourselves to deal with complicated and sensitive work issues on behalf of our members in our own companies and those who work alongside us, with limited resources and time.

What help is available to support the supporter?

We call upon the Energy Service Group Executive to identify what support is being provided both regionally and nationally to over-worked Trade Union Representatives, to identify where there are unmet needs, to establish examples of good working practices between branches and to share these with all branches within the Business and Environment Sector.

In addition we believe a workshop should be arranged at the 2017 Energy Seminar to look at the specific issues we may have in obtaining support for our representatives with a view to delivering some strategic planning to target the issue across the energy sector both nationally and regionally. It would be helpful if there could be regional staff present at the Energy Seminar.

Thirdly we believe UNISON should increase awareness and access to training opportunities amongst its representatives particularly with regard to equality, counselling and specialist training courses that could enable representatives to build their resilience and that of their branch colleagues to deliver confident and sustainable support.

Finally we call upon the Energy Service Group Executive to provide a point of contact to act as liaison and set expectations between representative and member when all other local and regional avenues have been exhausted, particularly in those cases where representative and member work for different employers and at different locations.

Western Energy

4. Changes to the way taxable benefits work through salary sacrifice schemes

This Energy Conference notes that the Government and the HMRC are making significant changes to the way taxable benefits work through salary sacrifice schemes.

Conference further notes that many energy employers have used such schemes to enable staff to take advantage of a range of products such as car purchase schemes and energy discounts. However whilst this has had some benefit to staff, energy employers themselves have gained by reducing national insurance obligations.

Conference understands that many key employee benefits would have traditionally still been provided in simple ways such as direct energy credits into energy accounts or staff discount cards with retailers etc.

Conference is now concerned that any changes now being made by the Government should not disadvantage energy members or leave them exposed to additional charges as a result of contracts being cancelled etc. Instead we should see energy employers return to more simplified ways of giving additional benefits to staff which are more transparent and user friendly.

Conference therefore calls on the Energy SGE to

- 1) Survey branches to fully understand what is happening, energy employer by energy employer and how they are responding to the HMRC changes
- 2) Give advice to branches who are being challenged by employers and ensure this becomes a key bargaining objective to prevent any loss to members through schemes being cancelled etc
- 3) Share good practice around the energy service group so when energy employers develop new staff benefits we can improve the overall workplace of all energy members.

North West Gas

5. Hydrogen Gas

Conference notes that UNISON is the largest staff union in the UK gas industry and has a proud heritage of supporting Gas members going back to local municipal gas corporations.

Conference further notes that UNISON has members working right across the industrial spectrum from qualified engineers, scientists, finance, managerial, customer contact, emergency response, shipping terminals. The list goes on.

The future of the gas industry remains open to question and is a source of concern for members in the industry. This is despite the fact the over 90% of UK homes rely on Gas as a primary source for heat, hot water and for cooking food.

Environmental obligations and dwindling domestic supply have led some to call for the replacement of Gas with renewable electricity referred to as the electrification of heat. This would be a colossal undertaking considering that already generational capacity is close to its demand limit and Coal generation is being phased out. In coming years the electrification of cars is also likely to significantly increase electricity demand beyond system capacity.

The development of technology around Hydrogen Gas and recent work to consider its use across the UK gas distribution system, has the potential to be a significant game changing development. Hydrogen is carbon free when used and so does not contribute to global warming with the right production system. It could use the existing gas distribution pipe network and the national conversion could be fully funded by continuing the levies already in place on household bills.

This conference therefore calls on the ESGE to;

- i) Support UNISON members working in the Gas Industry, by helping progress a sustainable future for the industry.
- ii) Help promote through engagement with key stakeholders, the development of a Hydrogen alternative into the future, so that Gas can be used safely in UK homes while still employing thousands of workers and supporting the UK's environmental obligations.
- iii) Seek to use its influence to promote the work of its members in the Gas industry and the proud heritage we have in this union.

Energy Service Group Executive

6. Safe Driving

Many UNISON members working in Energy will be familiar with various safe driving initiatives introduced by energy employers. This development will include not just broad awareness of the hazards of driving but also tracking devices which can monitor speed, braking distances, erratic driving etc.

Although UNISON would support common sense approaches to ensure we all drive safely and work with employers to ensure this is the case, we are increasingly concerned at the one sided approach now often adopted by energy employers.

Recent examples of this include the prospects of instant dismissal for those who transgress while at the same time pressure on workers who drive intensifies with more appointments booked or more scheduling of work in the same working day or week. This is unacceptable and any notion of safe driving for workers needs to incorporate safe working limits.

This conference therefore calls on the Energy SGE;

- 1. To continue to monitor the situation with regards to safe driving and to survey energy branches to understand the scale of these initiatives.
- 2. To put together a briefing note to Energy branches on how UNISON reps should respond to these developments and negotiate any improvements or mitigations
- 3. Understand the level of disciplinary action related to this issue affecting UNISON members and branches
- 4. Raise the issue and seek support from the UNISON health and safety unit and bargaining support unit.

Energy Service Group Executive

7. Call Centre Charter – how far have we come?

Conference notes the increasing numbers of our energy members working in call centres. Call centres can leave workers chained to their workstations under extreme pressure to provide faster responses to more and more callers.

Conference welcomes UNISON's Call Centre Charter, launched in 2012, to seek to establish a decency agenda for these members, allowing them to work effectively and efficiently in safe work environments. This followed research for UNISON into call centre work which found high levels of workplace stress, bullying and harassment, leading to higher than average levels of sickness absence.

Conference notes that while any worker can be subject to bullying and harassment, it disproportionately affects certain groups of workers including lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) workers. UNISON's first annual equality survey, conducted over the summer of 2016, found that LGBT members faced particularly high levels of discrimination even amongst these survey respondents, most of whom were from disadvantaged groups. Two thirds of trans workers and a third of LGB members had experienced or witnessed workplace discrimination in the past year. This compares to a quarter of all members responding.

Our energy members working in call centres report a range of issues including anti-LGBT abuse from callers. This is made worse by not being taken seriously by managers. Our LGBT members have little confidence in their managers' willingness or ability to address such abuse.

Conference believes it is time to review and refresh our work on the Call Centre Charter. Conference calls on the energy service group executive, working with the business and environment equal opportunities working group, to:

- 1) Survey energy branches on whether their employer has signed up to the charter;
- 2) If so, investigate:
 - 1) how it is being implemented and
 - 2) Whether it makes specific reference to tackling anti-LGBT abuse;
3. Urge training for managers and staff on LGBT equality issues and combating harassment and bullying;
4. Work with branches where the employer has not adopted the charter to negotiate its implementation.

National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee

8. Race Inequality in the Workplace

Conference notes that despite efforts to bring further equality into society, evidence shows that Black workers are still being held back in the job market. The amount of Black members holding senior posts in the energy employers still remains low, unemployment amongst Black people remains high - particularly amongst young Black people - and Black workers are also more likely to be in less secure forms of employment than White workers.

In a recent report published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission titled, 'Healing a divided Britain: the need for a comprehensive race equality strategy', it is stated that a failure to tackle deep-rooted race inequality will exacerbate division in our society unless urgent action is taken. Hailed as the biggest ever review into race equality, the 73 page report looks at a number of aspects of everyday life including education, employment, housing, pay and living standards, health, criminal justice, and participation.

For our union, clearly it is important that we support our members both in and outside of the workplace, and how we respond to tackling widespread inequality must remain a priority.

In workplaces that inequality is still prevalent, Black workers with degrees earn 23.1% less on average than White workers, and a significantly lower percentage of Black members (8.8%) work as managers, directors and senior officers. Black workers are also in insecure forms of employment such as temporary contracts or working for an agency – this increased in the last 5 years by nearly 40% compared with a 16% rise for White workers.

Unemployment is also a huge challenge. The unemployment rate amongst Black people is at 12.9%, and for young Black people in particular there has been a significant increase of unemployment. Apprenticeship opportunities are significantly lower for Black people, and Black men and women experienced some of the largest falls in full-time employment since the recession began and as the austerity programme continues.

It is sometimes difficult in workplaces for Black members to feel able to challenge this ongoing inequality. Some members have advised that they will not challenge or seek recourse if they feel they have been passed over for promotion. In addition, as there is now no legal requirement to carry out an Equality Impact Needs Assessment when reorganising services, being able to challenge where and why changes are made and the impact these have on Black workers can often feel overwhelming.

Conference notes that Branches and Regions continue to challenge employers when reorganisations are proposed; however, it is clear that inequality exists in many walks of life, particularly in employment. As a union we have a proud tradition of supporting Black members, this is particularly seen in our Black members Self Organised Group

Conference calls on the Energy Service Group Executive to work with the National Black Members' Committee (NBMC) to:

1. Produce material for Branches and Regions to use to highlight the continued gap between Black workers who hold senior positions compared to White workers, with keys points on how to tackle this in the workplace;
2. Encourage Regions to work with Branches to ensure that all employers complete Equality Impact Needs Assessments when carrying out reorganisations, and to ensure Black members take a lead role in scrutinising these assessments together with representatives from other SOGs; and
3. Encourage Branches to work with Employers to seek to ensure more apprenticeship opportunities are open to Black people

National Black Members' Committee

9. Workplace domestic abuse policies

Conference notes that following on from a women's conference decision in 1998, a model domestic abuse workplace policy and accompanying guidance were produced.

It is the intention that all UNISON workplaces have such a policy in existence, and many have been negotiated in the public sector. However, they are still not commonplace in the private sector, with few in Energy companies.

This is despite statistics from the Equality and Human Rights Commission, which revealed that:

- a) UK businesses lose 1.9 Billion each year because of domestic violence;
- b) 1 in 5 women victims will take time off work because of domestic abuse;
- c) 2 in every hundred victims will lose their jobs;
- d) And of those who remain in work, 75% will be harassed, abused, threatened or assaulted at their workplace.

Conference notes that domestic abuse knows no boundaries. 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men are affected; domestic abuse accounts for 16% of all violent crime in England and Wales, with 2 women a week and 30 men each year murdered.

The impact on our members cannot be underestimated. Both on the victims and their colleagues who may struggle to support them; be covering for their absence and/or feel at risk themselves if the abuser is making contact at the workplace.

Further, given the nature of the membership in the energy sector, many of our members may be working in isolation without access to easy support – either emotional or practical. It is therefore crucial that UNISON offers support to any members experiencing domestic abuse.

Conference calls upon the SGE to encourage branches to:

- 1) seek recognition from the employer that they have a responsibility for the health and wellbeing of their employees, and therefore to implement workplace domestic abuse policies, based on the UNISON model policy;
- 2) implement management training on recognising the signs of domestic abuse, incorporated into existing return to work processes where appropriate;
- 3) raise awareness of the UNISON There for You assistance available to members experiencing domestic abuse;
- 4) consider providing training for workplace reps on supporting members experiencing domestic abuse.

National Women's Committee

UNISON Rules and Standing Orders

RULE D – SERVICE GROUP CONFERENCE (See section D of UNISON Rules)

- 3.4.1 Each Service Group shall hold a Conference annually, for a period not exceeding three days.
- 3.4.2 The policies of a Service Group shall be determined by the Group's Conference.
- 3.4.3 Arrangements for the Conference shall be made by the Group's Executive in accordance with the Standing Orders.
- 3.4.4 Each Service Group shall have a Standing Orders Committee comprising either a panel of members of the Standing Orders Committee of the National Delegate Conference or two representatives from and nominated by the members of the Standing Orders Committee of the National Delegate Conference, together with representatives from the Service Group.
- 3.4.5 Delegates to the Conference shall be elected annually in accordance with a scheme to be drawn up by the Group's Executive and approved by the Group Conference.
- 3.4.6 The following members shall have the right to attend the Conference and to speak, but not to vote:
 - .1 All members of the Group's Executive (subject, in the case of the members who are also members of the Standing Orders Committee, to the rules of that committee).
 - .2 The General Secretary, head of group and such other staff as the National Executive Council, General Secretary, Group Executive, or head of group may determine.
 - .3 One representative from each professional and sectional body.
 - .4 The chairperson of the Group's Standing Orders Committee.
 - .5 Two representatives of each Service Group Regional Committee.
 - .6 Two representatives (being members of branches in the relevant Service Group) of each Self-Organised Group at national level.
 - .7 Two representatives (being members of branches in the relevant Service Group) of the National Young Members' Forum.
- 3.4.7 The Group's Standing Orders Committee shall be present at the Conference but, except as provided for, shall take no part in the Conference proceedings.
- 3.4.8 In accordance with the rules of procedure each branch represented within the Service Group may submit motions and amendments to the Group's National Conference or any special conferences.

- 3.4.9 Each Self-Organised Group at the national level may submit a total of two motions and two amendments to the Group's National Conference.
- 3.4.10 The National Young Members' Forum may submit up to two motions and two amendments to the Group's National Conference.
- 3.4.11 A special service group conference shall be convened on receipt, by the head of the service group, within any two month period, of requisitions to that effect, stating the business to be transacted, from branches representing not less than 25% of the service group membership.

RULE P of the UNISON Rulebook: Standing Orders For Conferences

(See pages 54-59 of UNISON Rules) NB: These rules have been amended to refer to service group conferences only.

1 APPLICATION OF STANDING ORDERS

- 1.1 These Standing Orders shall apply to all meetings of the Service Group Conferences held under Rule D.3.4.
- 1.2 In the case of a Service Group Conference, the appropriate Standing Orders Committee shall have power (but is not required) to decide at the request of the Service Group Executive that it is necessary that certain Standing Orders shall not be applicable to the Conference.
- 1.3 In application to Service Group Conferences, these Standing Orders shall apply, subject to the following modifications:
 - .1 "the Standing Orders Committee" shall mean the Standing Orders Committee referred to in Rule D.3.4.4;
 - .2 "the President" shall mean the Chairperson or Vice-chairperson of the Service Group Executive under Rule D.3.5.12 or such other person as the Service Group Executive or the Service Group Conference may have appointed to preside at the Conference;
 - .3 "the National Executive Council" shall mean the Service Group Executive;
 - .4 "the General Secretary" shall mean the Head of the Group;
 - .5 Rule P.3.1 shall not apply. The bodies who may propose motions and amendments for the Conference shall be: each branch represented within the Service Group; the Service Group Executive; Service Group Regional Committees and (where these are established) Sector Committees. Self-Organised Groups at the national level and the National Young Members' Forum may submit a total of two motions and two amendments to the Conference.

- .6 Standing Orders Committees for Service Group Conferences, in exercising powers in accordance with Rule P.2.3, shall have regard to the national negotiating machinery in devolved administrations. The Standing Orders Committee may make recommendations to restrict voting to representatives of members covered by that machinery which shall be subject to ratification by Conference in accordance with Rule P.2.4.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

- 2.1 The members of the Standing Orders Committee shall hold office from the end of one Conference until the end of the next Conference.
- 2.2 At its first meeting after it takes office, the Committee shall elect a Chairperson and a Deputy Chairperson from amongst its members.
- 2.3 The functions of the Committee shall, subject to these Standing Orders, be to:
 - 2.3.1 Ensure that the Union's Rules and Standing Orders relating to the business of Conferences are observed, and notify the Chairperson of any violation that may be brought to the Committee's notice.
 - 2.3.2 Draw up the preliminary agenda and final agenda of Conference business, and the proposed hours of business, to be circulated in accordance with the timetable stated in Rule D.1.9.
 - 2.3.3 Determine the order in which the business of Conference shall be conducted, subject to the approval of Conference.
 - 2.3.4 Consider all motions and amendments submitted for consideration by Conference and, for the purpose of enabling Conference to transact its business effectively the Committee shall:
 - .1 decide whether such motions and amendments have been submitted in accordance with the Rules.
 - .2 group together motions and amendments relating to the same subject, decide the order in which they should be considered and whether they should be debated and voted on separately or debated together and voted on sequentially.
 - .3 prepare and revise, in consultation with the movers of motions and amendments, composite motions in terms which in the opinion of the Committee best express the subject of such motions and amendments.
 - .4 refer to another representative body within the Union a motion or amendment which in the opinion of the Committee should properly be considered there; the mover shall be informed of the reason for so doing.
 - .5 have power to do all such other things as may be necessary to give effect to these Standing Orders.

- 2.4 Any decisions of the Committee which are to be reported to Conference shall be announced by the Chairperson of the Committee and shall be subject to ratification by Conference.

3 MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS PRE-CONFERENCE PROCEDURE

- 3.1 Motions, amendments and other appropriate business may be proposed for the Conference by the bodies set out in Rules D.1.10.3 and D.1.10.4.
- 3.2 Motions and amendments shall be sent to the National Secretary in order that the Standing Orders Committee may consider them for inclusion in the preliminary agenda.
- 3.3 The date and time by which motions and amendments to be considered for the Conference shall be received by the National Secretary shall be stated in the timetable to be published under Rule D.1.9.

4-7 CONDUCT OF CONFERENCES

- 4.1 The Service Group Conference shall meet in public session, except that by direction of the Service Group Executive or by resolution of the Conference the whole or any part of a Conference may be held in private. In addition to the elected delegates and those who under Rule D.3.4.6 have the right to attend and speak at Conference, the only persons permitted to attend a private session of a Conference shall be
 - 4.1.1 Such members of the staff as have been authorised by the Service Group Executive or the Head of Group to attend Conference.
 - 4.1.2 Such other persons as the Chairperson may determine.
- 4.2 The agenda for the Service Group Conference shall be arranged so that the first session of the Conference shall be in public, subject to Rule P.4.1 above.
- 5 Apart from the elected delegates and those persons who have the right to speak at the Service Group Conference under Rule D.3.4.6, no other person shall speak except by permission of the Standing Orders Committee.
- 6 Any questions of procedure or order raised during a Conference shall be decided by the Chairperson whose ruling shall be final and binding.
- 7.1 Upon the Chairperson rising during a Conference session, any person then addressing Conference shall resume her/his seat and no other person shall rise to speak until the Chairperson authorises proceedings to continue.
- 7.2 The Chairperson may call attention to continued irrelevance, tedious repetition, unbecoming language, or any breach of order on the part of a member and may direct such a member to discontinue his or her speech.
- 7.3 The Chairperson shall have power to call any person to order who is causing a disturbance in any session of Conference and if that person refuses to obey the

Chairperson, she/he shall be named by the Chairperson, shall forthwith leave the Conference Hall, and shall take no further part in the proceedings of that Conference.

8 VOTING

- 8.1 The method of voting shall be by a show of hands of the delegates present, unless a card vote is called by the Chairperson or immediately after the result of the show of hands has been declared by at least 10 per cent of the delegates registered at the Conference.
- 8.2 On a card vote, the delegate or delegates of a branch or group of branches shall be entitled to cast a total number of votes in accordance with the card issued to them in respect of their branch membership as at 30 September in the year preceding the conference and such votes will be cast as a single block or may be divided in line with a branch mandate.
- 8.3 In the event of a card vote being called or demanded, the card vote shall be taken immediately after it has been demanded, but no business shall be suspended pending the declaration of the result of the vote except that which in the Chairperson's opinion may be directly affected by that result.

9 TELLERS

- 9.1 Conference shall appoint delegates to act as tellers for the duration of the Conference.

10 WITHDRAWAL OF MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS

- 10.1 A motion or amendment which is shown on the final agenda may not be withdrawn without the consent of the Standing Orders Committee, whose decision shall be reported to Conference.

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 For Service Group Conferences, the Service Group Regional Committee may submit 'Emergency Motions' in writing, signed by the Secretary and Chairperson and sent to the Standing Orders Committee at least five working days before the commencement

of the Conference, except if it relates to events which take place thereafter. It will state at which meeting it was debated and adopted.

- 11.4 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.
- 11.5 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.

12 PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

The following procedural motions may be moved at any time without previous notice on the agenda:

- 12.1 That the question be now put provided that:
- .1 The Chairperson may advise Conference not to accept this motion if in her/his opinion the matter has not been sufficiently discussed.
 - .2 If the motion is carried, it shall take effect at once subject only to any right of reply under these Standing Orders.
- 12.2 That the Conference proceed to the next business.
- 12.3 That the debate be adjourned.
- 12.4 That the Conference (or any part thereof) be held in private session provided that:
- 12.5 A motion under Rules P.12.1, P.12. 2, and P.12.3 shall be immediately put to the vote without discussion and no amendment shall be allowed.
- 12.6 The Chairperson may at her/his discretion permit a motion under Rule P.12.4 to be discussed and amendments moved.
- 12.7 No motion under Rules P.12.2 or P.12.3 shall be moved by a person who has spoken on the motion or amendment in question.

13 AMENDMENTS TO A MOTION

- 13.1 When an amendment to a motion is moved, no further amendment may be moved until the first one is disposed of, subject to Rule P.16.
- 13.2 When an amendment is defeated, a further amendment may be moved to the original motion.

- 13.3 When an amendment to a motion is carried, the motion, as so amended, shall become the substantive motion, to which a further amendment may be moved.
- 13.4 A delegate shall not move more than one amendment to any one motion, nor shall the mover of a motion move any amendment to such motion.

14 LIMIT OF SPEECHES

- 14.1 The mover of a motion or an amendment shall not be allowed to speak for more than five minutes and each succeeding speaker for not more than three minutes, except where the Standing Orders Committee have decided otherwise.
- 14.2 No person shall speak more than once on a question, except that the mover of the original motion may exercise a right of reply for not more than three minutes, introducing no new material.

15 POINTS OF ORDER

- 15.1 A delegate may at any stage in a Conference raise a point of order if she/he considers that the business is not being conducted in accordance with the Union's Rules and Standing Orders.
- 15.2 Such a point of order must be raised as soon as the alleged breach occurs or at the earliest practicable moment thereafter.
- 15.3 The Chairperson's ruling on the point of order is final.

16 GROUPED DEBATES AND SEQUENTIAL VOTING

- 16.1 Where, in the view of the Standing Orders Committee, separate debates on specified motions and/or amendments dealing with the same subject matter would lead to undue repetition in the debates, a grouped debate and/or sequential voting may be adopted by Conference.
- 16.2 The following procedure will be followed:
- .1 The Chairperson will advise Conference of the order of business and of the sequence in which motions and amendments will be moved and voted on following a general debate, and of the effect of certain proposals on others.
 - .2 All motions and amendments included in the debate shall be moved.
 - .3 The general debate shall take place.
 - .4 The Chairperson shall again state the order of voting and shall advise Conference which, if any, motions or amendments will fall if others are carried.
 - .5 Voting will take place on motions, preceded by relevant amendments, in the order in which they were moved.

- .6 A debate being conducted under this procedure may not be adjourned until after all the motions and amendments have been moved.

17 REPORTS BY NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

- 17.1 After the opening of Conference the Service Group Executive shall present its report for the past year.
- 17.2 If the Service Group Executive presents a report to Conference which contains proposals or recommendations requiring approval and adoption by Conference, the Executive shall submit it under a motion seeking such approval and adoption.

18 REFERENCE OF OUTSTANDING ITEMS TO THE SERVICE GROUP EXECUTIVE

- 18.1 If at the end of the Service Group Conference, the business of the Conference has not been concluded, all motions and amendments then outstanding shall stand referred to the Service Group Executive. The Service Group Executive in turn shall then report back to the appropriate branch or body its decision on these matters. All such motions and amendments shall be responded to at least one month before the deadline for submission of motions and amendments to the following year's Conference.

19 SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER

- 19.1 Any one or more of these Standing Orders may be suspended by a resolution of Conference in relation to a specific item of business properly before that Conference and to the proceedings thereon at that Conference, provided that at least two-thirds of the delegates present and voting shall vote for the resolution, or in the case of a card vote at least two-thirds of the votes cast are for the resolution.
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Quick Guide to UNISON Jargon

Fair representation

The broad balance of representation of members of the electorate, taking into account such factors as age and low pay, the balance between part-time and full-time workers, manual and non-manual workers, different occupations, skills, race, sexual orientation, disability and gender identity – UNISON has a rulebook commitment to fair representation.

GPF

General Political Fund: Fund from contributions from opted-in members used for non party political campaigning.

HMRC

HM Revenue and Customs

Labour Link

Fund from contributions from opted-in members used to support the Labour party via the UNISON Labour Link.

LAOS

Learning and Organising Service

Lay Structure

A decision making body of UNISON members that does not include employees of the union.

National Delegate Conference

Supreme decision making body of UNISON – annual conference of branch delegates, at which the self-organised groups have representation.

National LGBT committee

National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Members Committee

NBMC

National Black Members Committee

NDMC

National Disabled Members Committee

NEC

National Executive Council - elected body of lay members.

NRMC

National Retired Members Committee

NWC

National Women's Committee

NYMF

National Young Members Forum

Proportionality

The representation of women and men in fair proportion to the relevant number of female and male members – UNISON has a rulebook commitment to proportionality.

Sector

A sub-group of a service group e.g. the housing associations sector of the community service group.

Self-Organisation

Groups facing discrimination meeting and organising to determine their collective agenda and feeding it into the union's structure.

Service Groups

Employer-based structures in the union. UNISON organises members in the following services – community, energy, health care, higher education, local government, police staff, water, environment and transport. Each service group has autonomy to decide the group's general policy and negotiate on behalf of their members. Each service group has an annual conference of delegates which sets the group's agenda for the following year.

SOC

Standing Orders Committee

SOGs

The four self organised groups: currently defined by UNISON national rules as women members, Black members, disabled members and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members

UNISON Parliamentary Group

A UNISON group of Labour MPs working closely with the union in the House of Commons.

