

**UNISON National Delegate Conference**

20–23 June 2017

Brighton Centre

# Conference document

containing Motions and Amendments  
and Amendments to Rule

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### Checklist

Please remember to bring the following documents with you when you come to Brighton.



- This conference guide
- Annual report
- Voting card (one per delegate)
- Credential card with photograph
- Confirmation of childcare arrangements
- Confirmation of accommodation details

## Welcome to UNISON National Delegate Conference 2017

A very warm welcome to everyone attending UNISON's National Delegate Conference, especially those for whom this is the first time.

The guide and the delegates information booklet is intended to help with information about how conference is run, debates are conducted and so on, as well as containing the motions and amendments.

I hope you find the guide helpful.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave Prentis". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'D' and 'P'.

Dave Prentis  
General Secretary

# 1. Standing Orders Committee First Report

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## 1.1 Membership

The Standing Orders Committee is responsible for the business of Conference. It consists of 15 members, 12 elected from the regions, who are not delegates to Conference, and 3 from the National Executive Council. The members of the Committee this year are:

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### Regions

Eastern	Liz Davidson
East Midlands	Jeanette Lloyd
Greater London	Jim Mansfield
Northern	Rachel Shepherd (Vice Chairperson)
Northern Ireland	Denis Keatings
North West	Mark Rayner (Chairperson)
Scotland	Alison Mitchell
South East	Jon Appleton
South West	Kevin Judd
Cymru/Wales	Richard Tanswell
West Midlands	Mike Maley
Yorkshire & Humberside	Karen Smales

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### National Executive Council

Abiola Kusoro  
Nicole Berrisford  
Chris Hanrahan

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### Secretary

Julie Lawrence, OSD.

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## 1.2 Recommendations

To assist the smooth running of Conference the Standing Orders Committee recommends:

- .1 the timetable should be as set out in Section 2 – ‘Conference Timetable’
- .2 the Order of Business, constructed based on priorities received from regions, the National Executive Council, self-organised groups, the National Young Members’ Forum, Private Contractors’ National Forum and the Retired Members Organisation, will be contained in Standing Orders Committee Report Number 2.
- .3 Any proposed alterations to the programme of business will be reported to Conference.
- .4 If a delegate is not present in the conference hall when her or his motion is called, that motion will fall.
- .5 The Standing Orders Committee proposes that speakers’ time limits should remain at a maximum of 5 minutes for movers and 3 minutes for subsequent speakers, rather than reducing speaking times from the first day of Conference. This is because the Order of Business reflects the priorities indicated by the union, and therefore sufficient time should be allowed for movers of motions at the start. Should the Standing Orders Committee decide to propose a reduction in speaking times, it will give advance notice of this intention to Conference.
- .6 Amendments to Rule, if approved by Conference, come into effect at the end of Conference, unless there is a specified date in the Amendment to Rule.

## 2. Conference Timetable

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### Tuesday 20 June

#### **Morning Session: 10:00 – 12:30**

Welcome to Conference  
 First and Second Report of Standing Orders Committee  
 Annual Report  
 UNISON Accounts  
 Motions

#### **Afternoon Session: 14:00 – 17:00**

Motions

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### Wednesday 21 June

#### **Morning Session: 09:30 – 12:30**

Motions

#### **Afternoon Session: 14:00 – 17:00**

Motions

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### Thursday 22 June

#### **Morning Session: 09.30 – 12:30**

Motions

#### **Afternoon Session: 14:00 – 17:00**

Amendments to Rule

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### Friday 23 June

#### **Morning Session: 09:30 – 12.30**

Motions

#### **Afternoon Session: 14:00 – 16:00**

Closing ceremony starting at 15:45

Business outstanding prioritised by the Standing Orders Committee.

Doors to the conference hall will be open each day half an hour before each session commences. During lunchtime doors will be shut.

*No smoking in the conference hall*

### 3 Conference Business

#### Organising and Recruitment

##### Organisation and Development

#### 1. Developing an organising branch

Conference recognises the increasingly hostile environment in which UNISON branches are operating. Austerity cuts have reduced the number of activists and put further pressure on facility time; while increased fragmentation of the workforce has made organising more difficult. Meanwhile the need for us to develop an organising approach has never been greater.

There is no one single model for an effective organising branch and Conference welcomes the various initiatives that branches, regions and the centre have taken to develop an organising approach, including the development of:

- 1) New branch structures including mergers and arrangements for joint branch working;
- 2) Shop Front organising facilities;
- 3) Digital support for organising;
- 4) Advice on and support for facility time agreements;
- 5) The use of Fighting Fund Organisers.

The challenge facing branches is that with all the other pressures activists often find it difficult to make time for organising, as other competing priorities crowd out organising work.

Conference believes that one way of overcoming this barrier is for branches to agree to establish an organising working group made up of activists solely focused on organising. Their remit will include developing an organising plan as part of the Joint Branch Assessment process, which they will then help implement.

The aim of the plan should specify how the organising working group members will help:

- a) Increase recruitment so that UNISON is stronger in the workplace;
- b) Develop new activists, to improve communications between UNISON, the members and the employers;
- c) Ensure that new activists are trained and supported, with the aim, wherever possible, of getting an

activist in each workplace;

- d) Reach out to workers in the fragmented workforce;
- e) To encourage democratic participation in UNISON by members through the democratic structures and Self Organised Groups.

Conference therefore calls on regions and branches to develop this approach to help branches deal with the challenges we face.

Conference also calls on the National Executive Council to ensure that a suite of materials and training is developed to support this approach.

In light of the increasingly serious challenges faced by branches, Conference calls on the National Executive Council to produce a paper before next year's National Delegate Conference setting out the various options available to branches to deal with the fragmented workforce and increasing pressure on activists.

*National Executive Council*

#### 1.1

Add at end of first paragraph:

“This organising approach cannot be focused simply at branch level. Branches need to feel connected to national strategies to tackle the severe attacks on living standards and services created by austerity measures rather than simply being left to deal with them on a branch by branch basis.”

*Tower Hamlets*

#### 2. Organising and growing our membership in private contractors

Conference notes that despite UNISON's necessary and continued campaigns against privatisation, the outsourcing of public services continues apace.

Conference completely condemns this Tory government's relentless attack on the public sector and continues to call on the government to properly fund publically delivered services. However, whilst privatisation remains a reality, conference also recognises that the union must continue to organise and grow our membership in private contractors. Conference also notes that not all our membership in the private sector has come via TUPE from the public sector. Many of our members have never

worked for a public employer or work in areas of private sector growth, like social care.

Conference welcomes last year's rule change to establish the new National Private Contractors Forum. This forum is giving our private contractor members a real voice in UNISON and a route to engage in the democratic structures of the union. This is a unique opportunity for the union to reach out into our membership in private companies, building our power and our ability to protect these workers.

In order to make these new structures a success at all levels, the union must pull together; focusing on building capacity and activism. We recognise the huge challenges the fragmented and outsourced workforce places on branches and resources, including attacks on facility time that make our reps' job even harder. However the union must support our reps in private contractors, and recruit and train more. Conference notes the good work that has been done so far:

- 1) Regional heads of private contractors in every region;
- 2) A new annual national training seminar for private contractor reps;
- 3) A new National Private Contractor Forum and several company forums.

In order to further our good work and to build our strength in private contractors, conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to continue to prioritise the union's activity private contractors and to work with:

- a) Regions to:
  - i) Continue to prioritise organising in private contractors and to allocate resources;
  - ii) To map their private contractor membership to identify on regional targets for organising (linking with the national organising targets where appropriate);
  - iii) Identify and develop activists to populate and engage with the national company forums and National Private Contractors Forum;
  - iv) Work with branches to look at how best to group and allocate private sector members, including new models of organisation where appropriate;
  - v) Focus on supporting branches and members to gain recognition in private employers.
- b) Branches to:
  - i) Identify, through the Joint Branch Assessment, key private contractors in their branch where there is the opportunity for organising and activist development;
  - ii) Where possible, nominate a member of the branch executive to have strategic oversight of the fragmented workforce in their branch;
  - iii) Engage in procurement processes to put pressure on tendering bodies to include priorities like the living wage and union recognition as

- conditions of transfer;
- iv) Support their members in the private sectors to attend and engage with the private company forums and relevant regional structures.
- c) The Private Contractors Unit to:
  - i) Prioritise increasing the number of companies we have national recognition with or a national relationship with;
  - ii) Work with all parts of the union to continue the campaign against insecure work and zero hours contracts, a real problem for workers in the private sector;
  - iii) Work with the Learning and Organising Services team to develop a programme of training for activists in private companies that is both relevant and accessible;
  - iv) Work with the Strategic Organising Unit to identify and promote a cross-section of examples of good practice in private contractor membership organisation and organising strategies.

*Private Contractors National Forum*

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## 2.1

In "b) Branches to:" insert new action point iii):  
 "iii) Engage with commissioners to lobby for a return of services to in-house provision;"

Renummer subsequent points.

*National Executive Council*

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## 2.2

Under "b) Branches" add new iv):

"iv) Use procurement processes to engage with employers on ethical procurement codes and policies and compliance with the Modern Slavery Act to ensure there are no abuses in the employer's global supply chain;"

Renummer points.

Under "c) The Private Contractors Unit" add new point v):

"v) Work to develop and promote good practice in ethical procurement so that members can engage with their employers on the ethical dimensions of procurement."

*United Utilities*

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## 2.3

In the third paragraph insert new sentence after "more":  
 "Private Contractor representatives need to be an integral part of branch structures and require support from branch officers and regional staff."

In the fourth paragraph 4 insert the word "within" between "activity" and "private".

In bullet point b) insert new iv):

“iv) Actively recruit, train and support reps from within the private contractor workforce”

Renumber accordingly.

*Lanarkshire Health*

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### **3. An organising strategy for the Social Care workforce**

Social care plays a vital and growing role in our society. Yet increasing demand, falling real terms funding, and increasingly complex care needs has put the sector under significant strain.

Social Care workers are often the people who are at the sharp end following cuts in public services elsewhere – dealing with clients who cannot be admitted to hospital, or are discharged too soon, who are at home waiting for care assessments.

Most care workers are highly committed to the work they do, but such conditions are putting them under significant strain. If we want a social care system that can meet the needs of our ageing population and treat recipients in a dignified way, then we need to invest in the workforce that provides it.

Conference welcomes the work done in Scotland by trade unions, working with the Scottish Government, to develop a ‘Fair Work’ agenda which has included a commitment to pay the Living Wage to all workers providing social care and ensure that a range of workforce matters are included in procurement.

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

Conference recognises that social care workers are an under pressure and growing section of the public service workforce. Conference acknowledges that there are significant challenges to organising this group of workers; they are often widely scattered, or lone workers and they may be subject to zero or nominal hour’s contracts. Workers doing the same job, for the same contracting authority, may be divided amongst several employers on widely varying terms and conditions. Many will also be required to meet stringent regulatory standards for the first time.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to develop a specific organising strategy for the social care workforce. This should consist of a recruitment strategy aimed at increasing UNISON’s presence amongst social care workers and a learning and organising strategy aimed at supporting members in expanding roles and in meeting regulatory requirements.

*Scotland*

3.1

After paragraph “Conference welcomes the work done in Scotland by trade unions...” add:

“Conference further welcomes the “Care Workers for Change” organising initiative in the North West which is growing UNISON density and activity in the sector through the campaign for fair funding, decent jobs and quality services.”

After paragraph “Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council...” add:

“Any strategy must recognise the anti-union hostility of many large commercialised providers and include a campaign for public sector commissioners to ensure trade union access and employer neutrality towards union organisation as an objective in considering all future social care contracts.”

*North West*

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### **4. Organising in homecare**

Working conditions in any sector in the UK, with widespread abuse of zero-hour contracts, breaches of minimum wage legislation, and non-payment of the time spent travelling between domiciliary care visits.

Conference recognises the work done by UNISON at all levels to highlight these issues and develop strategies to address them. Conference applauds the work of branches, regions, and our national local government, legal and press teams in experimenting with different organising models, and putting pressure on councils and providers to adopt UNISON’s Ethical Care Charter. But given our low membership density in this sector, the significant barriers to unionisation and the scale of the exploitation, conference believes we must find ways to extend and consolidate this work.

Conference notes that the care sector sustains itself on the goodwill of a workforce that is composed overwhelmingly of women, and disproportionately of Black women. Conference notes that the BBC has reported several instances of Black women care workers in Haringey branch being paid an hourly rate of £3.27. Conference stands in solidarity with this workforce and denounces our current government and the employers concerned for their callous and outrageous disregard.

Conference recognises that the vulnerability of a workforce overwhelmingly employed on zero-hour contracts demands a nuanced and multifaceted organising approach. Conference believes that we must develop unified and complementary industrial, political and legal strategies if we are to decisively challenge the balance of power in the care sector.

Conference appreciates that in a time of public sector cuts, homecare is one of the few sectors in which the workforce has grown due to demographic change and

the UK's ageing population. We recognise that the issues faced by care workers will not go away until we extend nationally our efforts to organise, unify and build power within the workforce.

Conference reaffirms its belief that homecare is best provided by public bodies, where it is subject to proper democratic oversight and accountability. However Conference recognises that the sector is currently dominated by private commissioning models, and therefore that we must challenge problems within these commissioning models at the same time as we challenge outsourcing itself.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to conduct a comprehensive review of the campaigns and projects UNISON is currently engaged in within the homecare sector. This review is to involve consultation with branches, regions and the national office to share experience and develop best practice for extending our organising efforts in this area, including ways to complement industrial organisation with political and legal approaches.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to review its organising strategy for the homecare sector and to explore how this may be better resourced.

Conference reaffirms its commitment to the Ethical Care Charter, and instructs the National Executive Council to review the materials available to branches and regions on its implementation. This review will compare its adoption in different local authorities with a view to drawing up a model implementation plan to be made available to branches and regions for negotiations.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to provide up-to-date bargaining guidance to branches on outsourcing and commissioning models in social care, including help with identifying potential issues and legal claims.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to consult with regions, branches and self organised groups in a review of subscription banding arrangements for low-paid members on zero-hour contracts, where low and unpredictable incomes can put workers off joining UNISON, and if appropriate to bring forward rule change proposals to National Delegate Conference 2018.

Conference calls upon branches to use their initiative in organising care workers in their areas. Conference recognises that some branches do not have the capacity currently to deal with additional private sector casework, and therefore instructs the National Executive Council to provide branches with up-to-date guidance on options to resource such projects.

Conference calls upon the Labour Link Committee to put pressure on the Labour Party to adopt UNISON's Ethical Care Charter as national policy, and to introduce it in general and local elections.

*Haringey*

4.1

Insert a new paragraph after sixth paragraph (currently ending ". . . as we challenge outsourcing itself"):

"Conference recognises that the current privatised model of social care has undermined care standards for those reliant on it as well as undermining pay and conditions for the sector's workforce. Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council both to highlight the abject failure of privatisation, and put the case for the universal provision of social care on the basis of need, not profit, by a democratically accountable public sector in future campaigns."

*Camden*

## Recruitment and Organising

### 5. Recruiting and organising Black members in the fragmented workforce

It is important that Black workers and members are equipped for the challenges within the changing and evolving landscape of the UK today. Conference recognises that a high proportion of Black workers eligible to join UNISON work in the fragmented workforce where they experience low pay and poor working conditions.

Conference believes that recruitment is more than just handing out leaflets. Branches need assistance to reach out to Black workers and members in the fragmented workforce. These workers need a revised strategy to engage them as the traditional approach is weak at best and not effective at worst.

Our existing members in this niche sectors need to be organised and encouraged to become activists. They will then need continual support, bespoke training and mentoring.

UNISON should explore effective and clear pathways which will assist Black members in not only developing as activists, but becoming leaders for the future.

It is therefore important that financial reasons do not become a barrier to Black members in the fragmented workforce becoming active. If an employer does not recognise trade unions (UNISON), it does not have a legal duty to give members paid time off to attend training to become workplace reps or health and safety reps etc.

Conference calls on the National Executive Committee to work with the National Black Members Committee to request:

- 1) Information and resources targeted at Black members and workers in the fragmented workforce;
- 2) Providing financial assistance for members who wish to become workplace representatives but are

- unable to access paid time from their employer;
- 3) Further specific training targeted towards potential Black leaders;
  - 4) Joint working with the newly developed Private Contractors National Forum and explore how this might be achieved.

*National Black Members' Committee*

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5.1

In action point 2) delete the word "financial"  
Delete existing action point 4) and replace with new action point 4):

"4) Setting up a short life working group with members of the Development and Organisation Committee to review points 1 – 3 and how this can be actioned through joint work with the various National Service Groups Committees, Self Organised Group Committees and explore how this might be achieved."

*National Executive Council*

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## **6. Support for activists in recruitment and organising**

Conference notes that recruitment and organising needs to be at the heart of any strong and powerful union.

Conference notes that we need to:

- 1) Recruit new members into our union to increase the union's voice and to ensure the long-term viability of the union;
- 2) Recognise that organising, not servicing, is what makes our union stronger and more able to win things;
- 3) Continue to identify and develop a new layer of UNISON activists for now and for the future;
- 4) Organise workers at the grassroots and teach them how they should be directly involved in building a strong union in their own workplaces, so that they have the power to win things for themselves.

Conference therefore requests the National

Executive Council to:

- a) Encourage regions to map our members in the community, voluntary and private sectors to identify target areas for recruitment and organising;
- b) Review and develop materials to help branches turn members into activists;
- c) Survey regions and branches and produce a series of best practice case studies with supporting materials and contact information on each of the case studies;
- d) Develop materials that will help staff and lay organisers to teach workers how the workers themselves need to build a strong union in their own workplaces so they have the power to win things themselves.

*Birmingham*

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## **7. Support for activists in recruitment and organising**

Conference notes that recruitment and organising needs to be at the heart of any strong and powerful union.

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- 1) Recruit new members into our union to increase the union's voice and to ensure the long-term viability of the union;
- 2) Identify and develop a new layer of UNISON activists for now and for the future;
- 3) Organise workers at the grassroots and teach them how they should be directly involved in building a strong union in their own workplaces, so that they have the power to win things for themselves.

Conference therefore requests the National

Executive Council to:

- a) Encourage regions to map our members in the community and voluntary sectors to identify target areas for recruitment;
- b) Review and develop materials to help branches turn members into activists;
- c) Survey regions and branches and produce a series of best practice case studies with supporting materials and contact information on each of the case studies;
- d) Develop materials that will help staff and lay organisers to teach workers how the workers themselves need to build a strong union in their own workplaces so they have the power to win things themselves;
- e) Regularly advertise to branches the recruitment aids that our service providers have produced, such as pull up stands, leaflet racks and portable counters, and encourage branches to buy this equipment.

*Coventry and St Cross Hospitals*

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## **8. Assistance for branches in Recruiting and Organising**

Conference notes that recruitment and organising needs to be at the heart of any strong and powerful union.

Conference notes that we need to:

- 1) Recruit new members into our union to increase the union's voice and to ensure the long-term viability of the union;
- 2) Identify and develop a new layer of UNISON activists for now and for the future;
- 3) Organise workers at the grassroots and teach them how they should be directly involved in building a strong union in their own workplaces, so that they have the power to win things for themselves.

Conference therefore requests the National

Executive Council to:

- a) Encourage regions to map our members in

- all relevant sectors to identify target areas for recruitment;
- b) Review and develop materials to help branches turn members into activists;
- c) Survey regions and branches and produce a series of best practice case studies with supporting materials and contact information on each of the case studies;
- d) Develop materials that will help staff and lay organisers to teach workers how the workers themselves need to build a strong union in their own workplaces so they have the power to win things themselves;
- e) Regularly advertise to branches the recruitment aids that our service providers have produced, such as pull up stands, leaflet racks and portable counters, and encourage branches to buy this equipment.

*Worcestershire*

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## Education & Training

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### 9. Increasing Participation/Activism Through Learning

UNISON members face increased uncertainties because of Government regulation and policy changes that directly impact on their jobs in many circumstances placing an onus on individuals to up skills for example the English Language Requirement for Public sector Workers, EU exit and the apprenticeship levy scheme.

Conference recognises the valuable role that learning in the workplace plays in supporting members to achieve personal and professional development and to tackle the UK skills gap.

Conference also recognises that learning in the workplace plays a crucial role in supporting branches, activists and members to develop confidence, skills and knowledge to be able to campaign and organise effectively to oppose the challenges and threats they face in the workplace.

Despite the evidence that member learning and the Union Learning Fund (ULF) activity brings many benefits including supporting UNISON's organising agenda much more needs to be done. The TUC/ Unionlearn research reported in 2016 that the number of Union Learning Reps (ULRs) per workplace had nearly halved between 2010 and 2015 and that there was a continual need to promote the wider benefits of the learning culture in order to mainstream the learning agenda within unions and that more ULRs are needed to help achieve this.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to encourage branches to:

- 1) Dedicate resources via the joint branch assessment process that aim to promote and mainstream UNISON's member learning and ULF programmes across all workplaces and to develop approaches to recruit around learning as part of the branch recruitment and organising plan;
- 2) Proactively target recruitment of ULRs in every workplace ensuring that they access training as quickly as possible;
- 3) Ensure that there is a trained Branch Education Co-ordinator in every branch that can support all new activists to access training as quickly as possible. Conference also calls on the National Executive

Council to:

- a) To review the current member only learning internal programme and workshops and the union-wide learning offer to new members to reflect the needs of members in the changing working environment;
- b) To encourage greater participation by branches and regions in union learning funded activity, particularly around supporting initiatives to establish high quality apprenticeship schemes in which apprentices are encouraged to join and get involved in UNISON;
- c) Learning and Organising Services to develop and promote new workshops and resources to encourage members to become active ensuring that there is coordination and collaboration between regions, branches and national departments;
- d) Linking political education to the development of new activists, including sessions targeted specifically at members from equality groups;
- e) Build on the current suite of political education materials to support the recruitment of new members and activist development better enabling UNISON to challenge any adverse consequences of the UK's exit from the European Union.

*National Executive Council*

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### 10. Save Our Trade Union Studies

"Education is the most powerful weapon which we can use, to change the world" Nelson Mandela.

Over the last 10 years the TUC national education programme has trained and developed over half a million trade union representatives. This has ensured:

- 1) Unions are effectively organised and deliver within the workplace;
- 2) Built solidarity amongst union reps from the affiliate Trade Unions;
- 3) Enabled working class people to gain qualifications that have given them life changing opportunities.

In September 2017, as a result of the withdrawal of Government funding, the TUC national education programme will cease to exist and will be replaced by a non-accredited short online course.

Over 127 professionally qualified Trade Union Studies lecturers with a knowledge, experience, commitment and passion for training trade union reps face losing their jobs. A vital resource that will be lost to the movement.

Unions appear to be adopting individual approaches to this problem. This will result in a breakdown in solidarity between affiliate unions. Individual unions cannot hope to provide the scope or coverage that is currently provided by the national programme, especially at a time when many unions' resources are hard pressed and stretched.

For the trade union movement to organise and grow it is essential that local union representatives and stewards are properly trained. The most effective way of doing this is to maintain the accredited national TUC education programme.

Conference believes we should seek to actively:

- a) Campaign to keep open the existing Trade Union Studies Units;
- b) Protect the jobs and avoid redundancies of Trade Union Studies lecturers;
- c) Keep the national TUC education programme accredited at level 1 & 2;
- d) Reinstate the national TUC education programme at level 3.

It is noted that when the Government previously cut TUC education funding in the 1990s affiliate unions via the TUC funded the national education programme. It is also noted that in the academic year 2016/17 after funding was cut by 50% the TUC made up the funding shortfall.

In recognising the importance of TUC education in organising and growing the union and recognising that this represents good value for money.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to work with the TUC to continue to fund the full TUC education programme until Government funding can be reinstated.

*Wolverhampton*

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## 11. Training and support for Activists

Conference notes that our activists are the backbone of our union. They are in the front line of all our battles with employers, our campaigns and they are the first people members turn to when they have a problem.

Over the past six years the role of a UNISON activist has become much harder than it has ever been. We face job losses, service cuts and employers using harsh sickness and disciplinary process to get rid of workers cheaply.

It now more important than ever that we ensure all our activists continue to receive good quality training delivered at a time and in a way that meets their requirements.

Conference therefore requests the National Executive Council:

- 1) Investigates and develops online training resources;
- 2) Confirms that although online training provision will be developed, there will still be a commitment to face-to-face training;
- 3) Commits to defending the collective learning experience of continuing to support and promote cross union training through the TUC;
- 4) Works with regions to ensure they provide adequate support to activists if sufficient support is not available in branches;
- 5) Produce an update on progress made against Motion 4, as carried at the 2016 National Delegate Conference.

*Worcestershire*

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## 12. Better training and support for branch activists

Conference notes that our activists are the backbone of our union. They are in the front line of all our battles with employers, our campaigns and they are the first people members turn to when they have a problem.

Over the past six years the role of a UNISON activist has become much harder than it has ever been. We face job losses, service cuts and employers using harsh sickness and disciplinary process to get rid of workers cheaply.

It now more important than ever that we ensure all our activists continue to receive good quality training delivered at a time and in a way that meets their requirements.

Conference therefore requests the National Executive Council:

- 1) Investigates and develops online training resources;
- 2) Confirms that although online training provision will be developed, there will still be a commitment to face-to-face training;
- 3) Commits to defending the collective learning experience of continuing to support and promote cross union training through the TUC;
- 4) Works with regions to ensure they provide adequate support to activists if sufficient support is not available in branches.

*Coventry and St Cross Hospitals  
Coventry City*

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## Participation

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## 13. Mental Health Champions

Conference recognises that good mental health support for members in UNISON is of vital importance and congratulates Cymru/Wales Region on their initiatives and development of Mental Health Champions.

UNISON Cymru/Wales has been active on mental health for some time. Last year, with the help of Mind Cymru and Time to Change Wales, Cymru/Wales Disabled Self Organised Group launched their mental health awareness training. They have developed a mental health champions training programme for members and the first champions graduated in April. Participants completed a two day training course designed by the self-organised group and it was run with the assistance of a mental health practitioner. The training gave members the confidence and skills needed to undertake this new role as they help colleagues with mental health problems by directing them to the best available help and support. The feedback has been fantastic.

Mental health problems are much more widespread than people think. One in four people will experience them at some stage in their life, so it is extremely likely that a family member or close colleague at work has been affected. Yet unfortunately, mental health is still surrounded by prejudice, ignorance and fear. The stigma can lead to isolation and exclusion, making it more difficult to recover. This is no way to deal with something that is so common and the truth is that mental well-being is not taken as seriously as physical well-being.

Mental health related problems are frequently caused by difficult situations in the workplace. We know that UK Conservative Government's austerity cuts directly lead to very high levels of anxiety for those who lose their jobs and for those remaining, who face the pressure of being forced to do a lot more work with fewer resources.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Encourage other regions within UNISON to consider taking forward this initiative and develop similar schemes in their regions;
- 2) Seek to encourage an interest in good mental health by education and publicity, particularly in UNISON publications, e.g. 'U' and 'Focus' magazines and the UNISON website;
- 3) Work with Labour Link to draw attention to MPs and members of devolved governments the need to fund good mental health services.

*National Disabled Members' Committee*

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#### 14. Mental Health Champions

Mental health issues are reported to affect one in three of us throughout our lifetime. Although statistically women are more likely to develop common mental health issues than men it is an issue that impacts all of our members. A recent survey also suggests that there has been a marked increase in mental health issues in young women whilst it has remained consistent with young men. As a union with over one million members, this is an issue we cannot overlook.

Mental health issues can affect people in many different ways, including barriers to understanding, social anxiety and low self-esteem. This can result in valued ideas and great potential being missed.

UNISON takes pride in being inclusive of all our members and this is as it should be. However, it is possible, even likely, that we have many members with a great amount of potential and skills to contribute, who simply feel unable to come forward due to fear of rejection and validity.

As a branch whose members are instrumental in providing care to the public of the North East who experience mental health issues, Northumberland Tyne and Wear Health branch would like to put forward this motion which will both support and promote all UNISON's members who feel unable, at this time, to engage with our union and to become active, due to their current mental health issues.

Conference notes that:

- 1) Mental Health issues remain a veiled cloak of stigma. UNISON must be seen to be proactive in informing our members that we will support them to develop the skills they need to contribute in whatever way they feel able to. We need to challenge stigma, enabling trust and confidence that all our members are valued. It is essential that we enable those experiencing mental health issues to feel open and honest knowing that they will not be judged;
- 2) We need to provide real support. Where required, it should be possible for UNISON to provide Mental Health Champions. Whether at conferences, training days or policy events, delegates/members should have easy access to a recognised and experienced mental health practitioner who can provide skilled and approved intervention to enable full participation.
- 3) UNISON needs to promote tolerance of mental health issues. Some Mental Health conditions can cause cognitive, emotional and behavioural changes. This can result in an individual presenting differently than expected. Causes for this may include anxiety, mental stimulation and/or frustration. Where this arises, members/delegates should be mindful and mental health issues are included under disability as a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

Conference therefore calls upon UNISON's National

Executive Council to:

- a) Take a lead in promoting awareness of mental health issues;
- b) Develop a strategy to enable and support members with mental health issues, allowing them to feel valued and able to become involved with UNISON;
- c) Ensure accessibility to Mental Health Champions at conferences, training and policy days;
- d) Promote tolerance of mental health issues at UNISON events.

*Northumberland Tyne and Wear Health*

## 15. Keeping branch activists safe from abuse

As the pressure on public services continues to grow, our members are faced with uncertainty about their jobs and their futures. This is a stressful time when they may need the assistance of their branch. As branches we have seen the increase in casework, ever more complex, dealing with restructure after restructure, fighting redundancies and outsourcing on a daily basis.

Sometimes our member's expectations are unachievable for any trade union, supported in part by the belief that UNISON is an insurance policy rather than a social and political movement for change. Sometimes our members get upset, angry and frustrated at the situations they find themselves in, and their trade union rep is the individual they can express that to.

Ever more frequently some members cross a line and our exhibit inappropriate behaviour towards their reps, being rude, aggressive and threatening. In these difficult times where equality is under attack and we are witnessing a rise in hate crimes, intolerance and discrimination in our society, it is crucial that UNISON provides support especially for Women, Disabled, Black members and LGBT stewards and branch officers, who are more likely to be at increased risk of abuse and harassment whilst undertaking their trade union duties.

Some members believe that because they pay their subs every month, it excuses this behaviour and that we should just accept it. Abuse and harassment have no place within the trade union movement, both to our members and to us as activists.

Branches are faced with having to threaten our own members with withdrawal of representation because when their behaviour becomes so poor. This should not be acceptable to UNISON however, when we look to address these issues we seem limited as activists in what we can do. We can complain to our employers however it's unlikely we will get any support as it's seen as a "union issue". We can complain to our regional officers but are told that we cannot refuse to represent abusive members.

The UNISON Case Form that contains the Conditions of Providing Assistance does not give sufficient notification that abusive behaviour towards a representative can result in withdrawal of representation. 'Rule I' does not provide sufficient guidance or support for activists who are victims of abusive and harassing behaviour.

Conference asks the National Executive Council to work with relevant departments, service groups, self-organised groups and young members' national committee's and forums to:

- 1) Develop and introduce a specific Courtesy and Respect Standards Contract between activists and members. This is to be drawn up and added to the Case Form and into relevant UNISON policies;
- 2) To assist and support with setting up of a peer to

peer network to support activists experiencing harassment or bullying. Identify "Champions" within regions and self-organised groups who can offer peer to peer support;

- 3) To create a regional contact who specialises in supporting activists who have experienced harassment or bullying;
- 4) To set up a counselling service for those activists who require support services as a result of their case work or activism.

*Southampton*

## Negotiating and Bargaining

### Bargaining

## 16. Invisible or non-apparent disabilities

Conference believes that disabled people and young disabled people in particular are being subjected to discrimination because of disabilities that are not immediately apparent or a diagnosis has not yet been made. The impact of such disabilities can lead to people being wrongly labelled as "lazy", or worse, and feeding the stereotype of those with invisible or non-apparent disabilities.

Conference also believes that young people (disabled or not) are more likely to have less resources than their older counterparts in terms of knowledge, experience and strategies in challenging attitudes to invisible or non-apparent disabilities.

Conference further believes that UNISON has a vital role to play in challenging this situation in the workplace, as collective action and support is far better than going it alone.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with the National Disabled Members committee and Young members forum to produce an information and negotiation fact sheet on invisible /non apparent disabilities branches to raise with their employers;
- 2) Disseminate information on the subject to branches and regions to raise awareness with members of this issue.

*National Disabled Members' Committee*

## 17. Dying to work campaign

Conference notes that the Equality Act provides protections against discriminatory treatment based on the

concept of Protected Characteristics.

Currently workers with a terminal illness are not classified as having a Protected Characteristic and therefore have very limited legal protection against employers dismissing them due to illness.

Conference notes that employers are therefore free to dismiss terminally ill workers once they have made reasonable adjustments to the employee's job to assist with the illness. Conference agrees that the last thing a terminally ill worker would need is to have to fight for the right to continue working and not face the indignity of being sacked.

In addition Conference notes that the loss of death in service benefits to terminally ill workers sacked before death is a further distress at a time when the future security for a family should be protected.

Therefore Conference agrees to support the TUC's Dying to Work Campaign and to lobby MPs to establish new legislation which seeks:

- 1) To get terminally ill workers covered by the Protective Rights at Work in line with those covered by the Pregnancy/Maternity Rights;
- 2) To protect death in service benefits;
- 3) To allow workers with terminal illness to die in dignity.

Conference calls on all branches and bargaining groups to approach employers to sign up to the Dying to Work Charter which commits employers to treat workers with a terminal illness with dignity, providing security of work, peace of mind and the right to choose the best course of action for them and their families.

*South Lanarkshire*

bullying/harassment;

- 5) Three young workers were hospitalised as result of bullying/harassment.

The survey also showed that there is a shocking lack of knowledge about employers bullying and harassment policies, and that reporting the issue made no difference in over half of the instances.

Conference believes that it is time to step up our campaigning against bullying and harassment which affects not only many young people, but is an issue that affects the entire workforce and service delivery, and is also often found to be particularly directed at workers who are women, Black, disabled, lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Commission a research project into this issue to identify the scale and impact of the problem as well as any good agreements, and policy and practice by employers;
- b) Report the findings to National Delegate Conference 2018 and hold a specific fringe meeting on the issue at that Conference;
- c) Develop a strategic response to the issue that addresses the need for:
  - i) Support of members who experience bullying or harassment;
  - ii) Provision of education and training for activists on dealing with cases of bullying and harassment as individual matters and as an organising issue;
  - iii) Appropriate information and support to those seeking to negotiate improved policies and practices with employers and their organisations.

*National Young Members' Forum*

## Health and Safety

### 18. Stepping up the campaign against bullying and harassment

Conference reaffirms its policy of a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment.

Conference welcomes the development of the work by UNISON's young members to raise the issue of bullying and harassment of young workers, and notes the disturbing results of the survey of young members conducted in October/November 2016 on this issue which revealed:

- 1) Nearly 40% of young workers have been bullied or harassed in the past;
- 2) Nearly 10% of young workers are currently being bullied or harassed;
- 3) A third of those bullied have had to take time off work because of it;
- 4) One in eight needed medication because of

### 19. Tackling Stress

Conference understands the large scale of harm to members caused by work related stress, including sickness and serious illness, and the personal cost to members and their families, and even premature death. The 2016 TUC survey of safety reps confirmed that stress was the biggest health and safety concern and that it is getting worse, no doubt to the cuts being ravaged on the public sector. Stress accounts for 45% of all working days lost due to ill health, and that the cost to our employers and the economy as a whole runs into billions of pounds each year.

Conference notes that the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Management Standards approach to tackling stress refers to the following six primary causes: demands, control, support, relationships, role and change. Furthermore, the HSE Management Standards approach comprises of a staff survey, and then focus group discussion of the results leading to action plans to address the issues identified. It recognises that the solutions need to come from the very people it affects.

Conference further notes that full branch involvement in the process can significantly improve the effectiveness of this approach. Where the branch is fully involved, then the survey is undertaken by the branch, and it can be carried out on the basis of confidentiality rather than anonymity. This should improve the questionnaire response rate, and we can ask for people's names, jobs, teams, and locations. In this way we can drill down and get a very much more detailed picture. We can identify the hotspots, where things are really bad, and the specific causes behind them. Full branch involvement may also improve focus group involvement, and the monitoring of the action plans, and should improve staff confidence in the whole process.

Conference accepts that full branch involvement in the process is a significant commitment, but that evidence from branches in the Northern Region, especially Gateshead Local Government and North Tees and Hartlepool Health, shows that it is:

- 1) A very real support to our members affected by stress;
- 2) Helps prevent the harm that stress can cause;
- 3) Helps develop partnership working with management;
- 4) Demonstrates the union effect;
- 5) Represents a considerable opportunity for the recruitment of members and reps.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to provide significant support for this initiative, to provide the necessary guidance, training and assistance to help make this approach available to all branches.

*Gateshead*

## Pay

### 20. Pay – tackling in-work poverty

Conference notes research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in December 2016 which showed that a record 3.8 million people – one eighth of the workforce – are below the poverty line despite being in work.

This means that a shocking total of 7.4 million people, including 2.6 million children, are living in poverty despite being part of working households in the fourth largest economy in the world.

Conference is alarmed that, as a result of the government's autumn statement, estimates suggest that the average public sector worker will be £3,700 worse off by 2021.

Conference further notes TUC analysis in January 2017 which found that household debt rose sharply over

2016, with weak wage growth leaving more families reliant on borrowing to support their living standards and also pay their energy bills.

More than this, Conference is appalled by the increasing need of public service staff to resort to using food banks to supplement what they are able to buy with their shrinking wage packet.

Conference believes this is a shameful indictment of successive governments' pay policies and the ongoing damage being wreaked on the economy and workers by Tory austerity and tax credit cuts.

Six years of freezes and caps in public sector pay means that the median public sector wage is now more than £2,500 lower in real terms than it was in 2010.

Conference is angered that this is set to deteriorate further with the 1% pay cap set to remain until at least the end of this parliament in 2020.

In addition, Conference notes the 2016 national insurance rises and that government changes to exit payments mean that some UNISON members stand to lose out on the amounts of redundancy pay they may receive in future.

Conference believes that poor public service pay does not merely affect those delivering public services, but also impacts on the services themselves, with many staff resorting to agency work or leaving the public services altogether. A number of UNISON sectors, such as social care, planning and health, are experiencing growing problems with the recruitment and retention of staff.

Conference does however congratulate the many UNISON activists – along with their branches, regions and service groups – who have worked to achieve the real living wage for our members in recent years.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue campaigning for an end to the public sector pay cap and highlighting the consequent falling living standards for staff;
- 2) Campaign against cuts to in-work social security such as tax credits and Universal Credit;
- 3) Expose the wider impact that low pay is having on our public services, particularly in terms of recruitment and retention problems in key sectors;
- 4) Campaign for the Living Wage Foundation's real living wage to be applied across the UK;
- 5) Where the real Living Wage is achieved, work with the TUC to highlight the campaign for a minimum hourly rate of £10 an hour;
- 6) Continue to promote RPI, not CPI, as the preferred measure of inflation;
- 7) Monitor new public sector apprentices and include them in collective bargaining so they do not start on the statutory minimum;
- 8) Continue to secure increases in holiday pay in line with European rulings;

- 9) Highlight the issue of “total pay”, to take into account wider issues such as pensions, grading, allowances and unsocial hours’ payments;
- 10) Continue to explore industrial action strategies in the face of the 2016 Trade Union Act and the possibility of coordinated action across UNISON sectors and service groups as well as across the public sector; and
- 11) Call on the TUC to organise a public sector pay lobby of Parliament in summer 2017.

*National Executive Council*

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20.1

In 10) add after “sector”:  
“in 2018;”

*London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority  
Tower Hamlets*

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20.2

After third paragraph ending, “£3,700 worse off by 2021”, add:

“unless the trade union movement uses its power and organises effectively to reverse this.”

After eleventh paragraph, ending “in recent years.”, add new paragraph:

“The struggle to end poverty pay and the social consequences associated with it, is a struggle that this trade union needs to urgently adopt. The slogan of a £10/ hour minimum wage for all workers, with no exceptions, is one which all our members would be willing to campaign for. Such a slogan could be taken up by the wider trade union and labour movement and gain real momentum if the larger unions were clear about developing a strategy to achieve it. Such a strategy should aim to deliver it within a timescale that workers can believe in and would be willing to fight for.”

Add point 12):

“12) Make the demand for a £10/hour minimum wage across all public services central to UNISON’s campaigning, with the demand prominent on the website and throughout public material.”

University Of Brighton

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## 21. Raising the Profile of the Living Wage

Conference notes that the (real) independently set Living Wage is £9.75 an hour in London and £8.45 an hour outside London.

Conference further notes when George Osborne was Chancellor he raised the national minimum wage for over 25s and called it the “national living wage.” In fact, it is

a “fake living wage.” This rebranding of the minimum wage for over 25s has caused confusion amongst employers in both the private and public sector who think that they pay the real Living Wage when all they are doing is paying the enhanced national minimum wage for over 25s.

Conference notes that when an employer pays a worker the minimum wage what it really means is that they would like to pay them less but they cannot.

Workers in the West Midlands are more likely to be low-paid than anywhere else in the UK with thousands earning under the legal minimum wage. Research from the Office for National Statistics shows around 1.7 per cent of workers in West Midlands are being illegally underpaid. This is the biggest percentage of any UK region. Across the region as a whole, 24 per cent of working people in the public and private sector are paid below the living wage.

Whilst the real independently set Living Wage is still modest, it is an improvement on the minimum wage and it does make a difference to low paid workers.

Conference notes ideally the Living Wage would be part of all national pay agreements, but notes this has not been possible. However, Conference does note that the Living Wage has been negotiated locally in local government, police, health and HE employers, and we need to build upon that.

Whilst some employers pay their directly employed staff the Living Wage, it is common for contracted out staff to be paid less than the Living Wage. In order to become Living Wage accredited by the Living Wage Foundation, employers must have a plan in place to ensure contracted out staff are paid the Living Wage, either now or upon contract renewal. This stops the “contracting out” of low pay.

Conference notes that UNISON, as a national employer, is Living Wage accredited but most branches that have branch-employed staff are not. In the West Midlands we believe in “practicing what we preach” and at the time of writing 10 of our 18 branches that have branch employed staff are Living Wage accredited.

Conference notes that we not only have to campaign for more workers to be paid the Living Wage, we also need to raise the profile of the Living Wage so the public and employers know the difference between the real and fake living wage. Conference therefore requests the National Executive Council:

- 1) Encourages all branches with branch-employed staff to become Living Wage accredited so that they can use the Living Wage logo on their letter headed paper and promote the Living Wage;
- 2) Encourage regions and branches to take part public facing campaigning in Living Wage week during week commencing 6 November 2017 to raise public awareness of the Living Wage;
- 3) Produce some UNISON promotional materials on the Living Wage to include some case study

testimonies from workers who have benefited from the Living Wage;

- 4) Encourages all service groups to produce guidance for branches on how to negotiate the Living Wage locally without adversely affecting national pay agreements.

*Coventry and St Cross Hospitals  
Sandwell  
Staffordshire*

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## Pensions

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### 22. Pension Funds: Divestment from fossil fuel extraction

Conference acknowledges the importance of well sourced pension schemes that provide reasonable returns so that members can live with dignity after retirement. Conference acknowledges the value of legislative changes that allow trade union representation on pension boards as a positive step.

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

Local Government Pension Funds (LGPF) in the UK have assets worth over £230 billion. At least £14 billion of this – over 6% – is invested into fossil fuel corporations.

Pensions are for our and our families' future. But that future is threatened by fossil fuel extraction. Without bold action to keep 80% of fossil fuels in the ground, a changing climate will have devastating consequences for people, societies and ecosystems around the world.

With this investment in fossil fuel extraction, our local governments are providing resources that accelerate climate change. As public bodies, councils have a responsibility to work for the public good (in Scotland statutory climate change duties); they should not be financially and politically supporting the most destructive industries on the planet. Fossil fuel investments undermine existing local authority climate change mitigation; adaptation strategies and commitments.

Making 4.6 million public sector pensions dependent on long term profits from an industry threatening a safe planetary future is not a sensible investment strategy. When local governments allow pensions to be exposed to fossil fuels, they are relying on stranded assets for the safe retirement of their workers.

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

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

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

Conference agrees to:

- 1) Campaign for divestment from fossil fuel extraction for all pension funds where we have members and we can argue it is in the fiduciary interests of scheme members;
- 2) Seek alliances amongst other trade unions who share our objective and work co operatively with them to achieve divestment;
- 3) Engage with UNISON members with an aim of improving their knowledge base around climate threats created by fossil fuel extraction;
- 4) Produce literature that will enable branches to engage with the employers where they are members of a LGPF.

*Scotland*

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#### 22.1

Insert new sixth paragraph:

“Conference notes that UNISON is the largest staff union in the UK gas industry and welcomes attempts by the UNISON energy service group executive to investigate hydrogen with carbon capture storage (CCS) as an alternative to gas in the UK's supply and distribution pipe network to UK households.”

*National Executive Council*

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#### 22.2

Insert new eighth paragraph:

“Conference notes fiduciary duty is defined by the Law Commission as ‘ensuring that pensions can be paid, ensuring that this is undertaken at the best possible value’. Conference therefore agrees to ensure that before any UNISON campaign for disinvestment takes place, the campaign must ensure that there is no short term economic damage to each pension fund and that an

economic strategy for re-investment of the disinvested assets is identified to ensure no long term damage to each fund and the ability to pay pensions.”

*National Executive Council*

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22.3

Delete 4) and replace with:

“4) Produce literature on fossil fuel divestment that will enable branches to engage with the employers where they are members of a LGPF.”

*Hastings and Eastbourne Healthcare*

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### 23. Making Pensions safe in a time of climate crisis

Conference congratulates:

- 1) UNISON for its active engagement in Trade Unions for Energy Democracy, which has supported divestment from fossil fuels and a managed transition to a clean economy;
- 2) The Waltham Forest Pension Fund which was the first UK local government pension fund to commit to divesting in September 2016, and Southwark Council Pension Fund, which did so in December 2016, joining \$5 trillion in divestment commitments worldwide.  
Conference acknowledges:
  - a) That there are strong financial and moral cases to divest from fossil fuel shares and the global threat of climate change to livelihoods, health and wellbeing without such intervention;
  - b) The risk to pensions that have been over-exposed to fossil fuels, especially a significant proportion of the £200 billion local government pensions in the UK;
  - c) The Paris 2015 Agreement, committing our governments to keep the global temperature increase to under 2 degrees and aim for 1.5 degrees. Carbon budgets produced by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, United Nations and the International Energy Agency show that preventing two degrees of warming relies on not burning 60-80% of all proven fossil fuels;
  - d) Repeated warnings by Governor of the Bank of England Mark Carney that this means “the vast majority of reserves are unburnable” and that coal, oil and gas share prices could be significantly devalued when necessary action on climate change is taken;
  - e) Pension funds have a legal duty to treat members “fairly as between them”. That means taking seriously the longer-term interests of younger members who may well be affected more by the climate transition;
  - f) The importance of a just transition for workers in

the fossil fuel-related sectors such as offshore oil, power generation and the automobile industry, so that they can benefit from a transition to decent and unionised jobs in the low carbon economy;

- g) This is a matter for all members of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) whether they work in local government, police, further education, higher education or have been TUPE’d to the private sector.

Conference agrees to:

- i) Call upon our local LGPS to invest safely for pension holders’ wellbeing, by divesting fossil fuels over five years and reinvesting into the just transition, giving due regard to fiduciary duty and if necessary call for the fund administrators to consult members of each pension fund.
- ii) Call upon National Delegate Conference to seek divestment of LGPS from fossil fuels over five years giving due regard to fiduciary duty.

*Norfolk County*

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23.1

Insert new point f) and renumber accordingly:

“f) The Law Commission definition of fiduciary duty as ‘ensuring that pensions can be paid, ensuring that this is undertaken at the best possible value’. Conference therefore agrees to ensure that before any UNISON campaign for disinvestment takes place, the campaign must ensure that there is no short term economic damage to each pension fund and that an economic strategy for re-investment of the disinvested assets is identified to ensure no long term damage to each fund and the ability to pay pensions;”

*National Executive Council*

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23.2

Insert new point g) and renumber accordingly:

“g) UNISON is the largest staff union in the UK gas industry and the work of the UNISON energy service group executive in investigating hydrogen with carbon capture storage (CCS) as an alternative to gas in the UK’s supply and distribution pipe network to UK households.”

*National Executive Council*

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### 24. Making Pensions Safe in a Time of Climate Crisis

Conference congratulates:

- 1) UNISON for its active engagement in Trade Unions for Energy Democracy, which has supported divestment from holdings in corporations focused on fossil fuel extraction and processing, and also

- backed a managed transition to a clean economy;
- 2) The Waltham Forest Pension Fund, which was the first UK local government pension fund to commit to fossil fuel divestment in September 2016, and Southwark Council Pension Fund, which did so in December 2016. The current value of divestment commitments worldwide now amounts to some \$(US) 5 trillion.
- Conference recognises that:
- a) There are strong financial and moral cases to divest from fossil fuel shares and the global threat of climate change to livelihoods, health and wellbeing without such intervention;
  - b) The risk to pension funds that have been over-exposed to shareholdings relating to fossil fuels, especially a significant proportion of the £200 billion local government pensions in the UK;
  - c) The December 2015 Paris Climate Agreement, committing our government to keep the global temperature increase to under 2 degrees and aim for 1.5 degrees. Carbon budgets produced by the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change (IPCC), United Nations (UN) and the International Energy Agency (IEA) show that preventing 2 degrees of warming relies on not burning 60%-80% of all proven fossil fuels;
  - d) Repeated warnings by Governor of the Bank of England Mark Carney that this means “the vast majority of reserves are unburnable” and that coal, oil and gas share prices could be significantly devalued when necessary action on climate change is taken;
  - e) Pension funds have a legal duty to treat members “fairly as between them”. That means taking seriously the longer-term interests of younger members who may well be affected more dramatically by the climate transition;
  - f) The importance of a just transition for workers in the fossil fuel-related sectors such as offshore oil, power generation and the automobile industry, so that they can benefit from a transition to decent, unionised jobs in the low carbon economy.

Conference agrees that UNISON should campaign for local authorities covered by the Local Government Pension Scheme to invest safely for pension-holders’ wellbeing, by divesting from fossil fuel-related shareholdings over the next 5 years and reinvesting in vehicles for a just transition to an environmentally sustainable low carbon economy, in line with fiduciary duty.

*Camden*

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24.1

Insert new point f) and renumber accordingly:

“f) The Law Commission definition of fiduciary duty as ‘ensuring that pensions can be paid, ensuring that this

is undertaken at the best possible value’. Conference therefore agrees to ensure that before any UNISON campaign for divestment takes place, the campaign must ensure that there is no short term economic damage to each pension fund and that an economic strategy for re-investment of the divested assets is identified to ensure no long term damage to each fund and the ability to pay pensions;”

*National Executive Council*

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24.2

Add new point g):

“g) UNISON is the largest staff union in the UK gas industry and the work of the UNISON energy service group executive in investigating hydrogen with carbon capture storage (CCS) as an alternative to gas in the UK’s supply and distribution pipe network to UK households.”

*National Executive Council*

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## 25. Pension Disinvestment From Fossil Fuels

Conference congratulates:

- 1) UNISON for its active engagement in Trade Unions for Energy Democracy, which has supported divestment from fossil fuels and a managed transition to a clean economy.
  - 2) The Waltham Forest Pension Fund which was the first UK local government pension fund to commit to divesting in September 2016, joining \$3.4 trillion in divestment commitments worldwide.
- Conference acknowledges:
- a) That there are strong financial and moral cases to divest from fossil fuel shares and the global threat of climate change to livelihoods, health and wellbeing without such intervention;
  - b) The risk to pensions that have been over-exposed to fossil fuels, especially a significant proportion of the £200 billion local government pensions in the UK;
  - c) The Paris 2015 Agreement, committing our governments to keep the global temperature increase to under two degrees and aim for 1.5 degrees. Carbon budgets produced by the IPCC, UN and the IEA show that preventing two degrees of warming relies on not burning 60-80% of all proven fossil fuels.
  - d) Repeated warnings by Governor of the Bank of England, Mark Carney that this means “the vast majority of reserves are unburnable” and that coal, oil and gas share prices could be significantly devalued when necessary action on climate change is taken;
  - e) Pension funds have a legal duty to treat members

“fairly as between them”. That means taking seriously the longer-term interests of younger members who may well be affected more by the climate transition;

- f) The importance of a just transition for workers in the fossil fuel-related sectors such as offshore oil, power generation and the automobile industry, so that they can benefit from a transition to decent and unionised jobs in the low carbon economy. Conference agrees to:
- i) Call upon our Pension Schemes to invest safely for pension-holders’ wellbeing, by divesting fossil fuels over five years and reinvesting into the just transition, in line with fiduciary duty.

*Southwark*

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25.1

Insert new point f) and renumber accordingly:

“f) The Law Commission definition of fiduciary duty as ‘ensuring that pensions can be paid, ensuring that this is undertaken at the best possible value’. Conference therefore agrees to ensure that before any UNISON campaign for divestment takes place, the campaign must ensure that there is no short term economic damage to each pension fund and that an economic strategy for re-investment of the divested assets is identified to ensure no long term damage to each fund and the ability to pay pensions;”

*National Executive Council*

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25.2

Add new point g):

“g) UNISON is the largest staff union in the UK gas industry and the work of the UNISON energy service group executive in investigating hydrogen with carbon capture storage (CCS) as an alternative to gas in the UK’s supply and distribution pipe network to UK households.”

*National Executive Council*

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## 26. Pension Fund Costs and Charges

Conference notes that the combined assets of workplace pensions in the UK stands at £3 trillion and that 99% of that money is managed by commercial asset managers. The most shocking consideration in this process is that no pension fund either defined benefit or defined contribution can tell scheme members how much it costs to run the pension fund. In a report produced by the Financial Conduct Authority, the regulator of asset managers, found the following.

- 1) Asset management firms have consistently

earned substantial profits with an average profit margin of 36%;

- 2) Investors (pension funds) are not given information on transaction costs in advance, meaning that investors cannot take full cost of investing into account when they make their initial investment decision.

In 2016, the West Midlands Local Government Pension Fund investigated costs in one asset, private equity, it found investment costs were £92m rather than the £10m reported to scheme members. It has been estimated by the Transparency Taskforce that annual fee extraction from our pension funds could be as high as £120bn.

These costs should be put back into our pension funds and not be taken by financial companies. This would mean defined benefit schemes would be more sustainable and defined contribution schemes would put more money back into the members’ pot.

Conference notes the success of the Local Government Pension Schemes in England, Wales and Scotland who introduced a voluntary cost collection methodology.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Undertake a campaign with members, branches and regions to raise the demand for cost transparency in our members’ pension funds;
- b) Place pension scheme cost collection on the bargaining table with employers who sponsor the defined benefit and contribution schemes of our members;
- c) Demand government introduce the legislation to compel pension scheme trustees to collect and publish their scheme’s investment costs throughout the investment chain.

*Wolverhampton*

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## 27. Retaining and campaigning for good pension schemes for our Members

Conference is concerned that good final salary pension provision is continuing to decline. Defined benefit pension schemes that guarantee pensions based on final salary or career average are under threat and many in the Education and Energy sectors have closed to new entrants and some have closed to current members as the scheme has closed, and there is no future pension accrual, and many schemes that remain open are increasing member contributions and reducing pension benefits and the way future pension is calculated.

The main reason employers give is high costs and risk of further increases of providing the benefits leading to increased employer contributions.

Even in the public sector certain employers are also looking at ways to reduce pension costs. In some cases by tempting members to leave the schemes by offering

pay increases. Another tactic is to transfer services to arms length companies that then try to exclude new starters from the Public Sector Schemes.

There are a number of reasons why costs are increasing but by far the most damaging is the assumptions the Schemes and their Actuaries are using to value the future growth of their funds.

For example, many funds base future growth assumptions on the likely increase in Gilts. Yields have in this area been artificially low since the last recession so basing returns just on Gilts increases the cost of pension benefits.

We believe a better method would be to base it on the potential growth of the actual assets of the fund. For example if the LGPS England and Wales funds had all used central government assumption on future growth in 2013, the past service deficit of £46 billion could have been halved and employer contributions reduced and that could have led to less cuts in services and jobs.

Conference welcomes the commissioning of independent actuarial advice to help branch negotiations in the private sector to improve Pension settlements for members. Particularly where defined contribution schemes, which do not guarantee any level of retirement income, have replaced defined benefit schemes there has been success in increasing the employer contributions.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to continue to recognise the importance to the future of good pension provision and to engage and empower scheme members to question and challenge the way the costing of their pension benefits are calculated.

Conference further calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to campaign to retain and improve upon good quality pension schemes for all our members;
- 2) Brief all UNISON Pension Leads and Pension Champions on how to engage on this crucial issue and make courses and speakers available for regions and branches on this matter;
- 3) Produce and distribute a negotiators guide for negotiators and members on alternative cost assumptions for schemes;
- 4) Raise this issue with Government and other political parties through the TUC and Labour Link and continue to lobby and press them to change the assumptions used to calculate the value of the future growth of our members pension schemes.

*North Yorkshire*

## Campaigning

### Public Services

#### 28. The Integration of Health and Social Care – Responding To The Challenges

Conference notes that across the UK there are a number of current initiatives seeking to bring about the integration or transformation of health and care services.

These include, but are not limited to, the Five Year Forward View and Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) in England, the ten year vision for health and social care based on the Bengoa report in Northern Ireland, and further moves towards more integrated health and social care in Scotland and Wales.

Conference remains deeply concerned that, as a direct result of the actions of the UK Conservative government, these plans are taking place at a time of prolonged austerity, with the NHS experiencing its poorest settlement for a generation and social care continuing to be run into the ground by years of chronic under-funding.

Conference condemns the government's 2016 Autumn Statement that failed to provide any extra money for health and care services, with the subsequent local government financial settlement failing miserably to provide anything like the levels of funding that social care needs. Integration will not solve the funding crisis.

Conference notes that there are many challenges emanating from plans to transform or integrate services, including issues for staff in integrated workplaces, cuts to patient services, the threat of privatisation and the increasing use of shared services.

Conference notes that UNISON has always been open to discussing new ways of working and to consider change if this is demonstrably in the interests of patients. However, where change is just a smokescreen for cuts, privatisation or attacks on our members, UNISON must continue to respond decisively to defend services and jobs.

Conference asserts that the most effective and enduring innovations in our health and care services have come when workers and trade unions are properly involved and engaged, as well as the public. Conference therefore expresses its anger that too often this has not been the case, with the secrecy and lack of transparency around the development of STPs in England being a particularly worrying recent example.

Conference reiterates UNISON policy in favour of the principle of greater health and social care integration, but with a number of important caveats around the need

for integration not to be used as a cover for cuts, the need for full patient and staff engagement, and the need for integration not to be used to level down pay and conditions.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Condemn in the strongest possible terms any attempts to use integration or transformation as a smokescreen for cuts, privatisation or attacks on staff;
- 2) Use every means at the union's disposal to challenge damaging job reduction plans – whether in the media, in councils, in Parliament, through protests, demonstrations and finally industrial action where there is a confirmed trade dispute;
- 3) Ensure that cross service group work takes place to provide a joined-up response where necessary;
- 4) Spread best practice from across the UK, both in terms of approaches to integration and tactics for challenging damaging plans;
- 5) Demand that the public and the workforce is involved from the start in the development and implementation of plans;
- 6) As appropriate, work with other trade unions, patient groups and campaigning organisations to build alliances;
- 7) Continue to produce guidance and provide campaigning support where branches are fighting damaging changes.

*National Executive Council*

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28.1

Insert new ninth paragraph after "...level down pay and conditions.":

"Conference notes with concern that inadequate funding may result in integration and transformation agendas leading to local controversies about where the deepest cuts should take place – potentially pitting community against community."

Insert new point 1):

"1) Campaign to highlight the government's underfunding of the NHS and social care, and the impact on vulnerable service users and the predominantly low-paid female workforce."

Renumber points 1) to 7) as 2) to 8).

Insert new point 9):

"9) Oppose local service reductions or closures, and consistently highlight the root cause in the underfunding of services by the UK government;"

Insert new point 10):

"10) Use the avenues available at combined authority level in England to promote greater investment and better employment standards in social care and health services."

*Sefton*

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28.2

After paragraph beginning "Conference reiterates UNISON policy in favour of the principle of greater integration..." insert a new sentence:

"Conference further recognises that the current largely privatised model of social care has undermined care standards for those reliant on it as well as undermining pay and conditions for the sector's workforce."

Then under "Conference calls on the National Executive" insert a new point 3):

"3) To highlight in campaigning materials the abject failure of the privatised model of social care, and to popularise the case for the universal provision of social care on the basis of need, not profit, by a democratically accountable public sector."

*Camden*

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28.3

Add new ninth paragraph:

"Conference believes that the huge size of the national demonstration in defence of the NHS in March this year that was mostly built by local campaigns and the number of local demonstrations around the country shows the potential for a serious fight to defend the NHS. We believe that the unions should be doing more to build that fight."

Add new point 8):

"8) Ask the TUC to call national demonstration in defence of the NHS."

*London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority  
Tower Hamlets*

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28.4

Add a final sentence:

"Conference agrees to affiliate to 'Health Campaigns Together' which organised the massive demo in defence of the NHS on 4 March 2017 and calls on the National Executive Council to initiate national action to protect the Health Service."

*Hackney*

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28.5

In action point 2) after "union's disposal" insert the following:

"including the 172,000 retired members of UNISON"

*National Retired Members' Committee*

## 29. Campaigning around Integration and Social Care

Conference notes that the integration of health and social care remains a policy priority for the various governments of the UK. The Welsh Government continues to recognise this agenda as being of national strategic importance.

Conference reaffirms its support for the principle of integration as a means of improving the seamless delivery of care to patients and service users.

However, Conference continues to have many concerns about the way this is done and the current funding environment in which these initiatives are taking place.

Conference asserts that integration should never be used as a cover for cuts or seen as a way of delivering care on the cheap.

After all, there is no evidence to back up claims that integration saves money; on the contrary, in the short term at least there should be an expectation that integrating services actually costs money, as additional funding may be required for double running costs and retraining or redeploying health and care staff. In fact, additional capital funding is often required in order to ensure current premises and physical services are fit for purpose – the Welsh Government allocated an additional £40m capital funding specifically targeted at the development of integrated health and social care.

Conference notes that there are often wider issues in integrated workplaces about merging two often quite different working cultures, and these challenges should not be underestimated.

Similarly, Conference has real concerns about the potential for integration, if handled poorly, to lead to two-tier workplaces and for equality issues to be insufficiently considered. Occupational therapists employed by Swansea Council recently received pay awards running into thousands of pounds in recognition they were being significantly underpaid in comparison to NHS peers, but this was only secured after a significant UNISON campaign work.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to support integration initiatives where these can be demonstrated to be in the interests of patients, service users and staff;
- 2) Condemn any attempts to use integration as a cover for cuts or as a means of levelling down pay and conditions;
- 3) Ensure that cross service group work takes place between health and local government branches to ensure a joined-up UNISON response;
- 4) Demand that patients, service users and the workforce are properly involved in plans to integrate services.

*Cymru/Wales*

## 30. The Crisis in Health and Social Care

Conference, there are three areas of concern. The crisis in Social Care, the underfunding of our NHS and decimation of our Community Care services, all combine to create a perfect storm.

The scale of the problems now faced by adult social care providers are enormous, and are the direct result of massive Government cuts to funding. The National Care Association has said that we are now beyond the crisis point and are now on the edge of a cliff.

A survey by UNISON found that 65 per cent of homecare, residential support and day services staff said they have less time to spend with those they care for because of staff shortages and 36 per cent said rationing of supplies had increased as a result of budget cuts.

The Local Government Association estimates that the gap in social care funding will be at least £2.6 billion unless the Government urgently injects more cash into the service.

Raising Council Tax will not be enough to solve the problems and will only place the lowest paid under even more financial pressure. Net Social Care expenditure has dropped in real terms from £8.1 billion in 2005-6 to £6.3 billion, a drop of a fifth. This is further exacerbated by the national shortage of community health care workers and nurses creating gaps in the services to our most vulnerable citizens.

Recruiting and retaining staff is crucial to our NHS and the campaign of denigration and vilification of the NHS by Government Ministers combined with years of pay cuts and a lack of real terms pay increases has led to a situation where staff are leaving the NHS and critical posts in our emergency departments cannot be filled.

As our underfunded hospitals struggle to function because of further Government cuts, they are faced with having nowhere to send elderly patients when their treatment is complete. They cannot find beds in the hospitals but they also cannot discharge them to the community as the services are not there to support them.

This leads to a crisis situation as beds are blocked and people are forced to stay in hospital. It is creating an intolerable vicious circle and only a clear policy of properly funding social care and health services together with a coherent plan for the integration will begin to address this crisis.

Conference therefore resolves to:

- 1) Campaign for properly and adequately funded Health and Social Care Services;
- 2) Promote and publicise within our national, regional and local press and media our NHS and Social Care Champions;
- 3) Continue to oppose cuts to jobs and services within Health and Social Care.

*Yorkshire and Humberside*

30.1

Add new point 4):

"4) Conference agrees to affiliate to 'Health Campaigns Together' which organised the massive demo in defence of the NHS on 4 March 2017."

*Hackney*

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### **31. Tackling the Underfunding Crisis in Health and Social Care**

Conference notes with alarm the continuing crisis of underfunding in our public services.

The King's Fund has reported that the share of GDP spent on health has dropped from 8.8% in 2009, to 7.3% in 2014/15, and is projected to be just 6.6% in 2020.

Spending on social care has fallen by over 9% since 2010 and is set to fall below 1% of GDP by 2020. Even if every council added the 2% precept to council tax bills every year for the next four years, there would still be a £2.3bn funding gap.

It is in this context of underfunding that NHS England has set up 44 newly-defined sub-regional areas to develop 'Sustainability and Transformation Plans' (STPs). NHS providers, NHS commissioners and local authorities have been set the task of formulating plans to integrate health and social care services for their 'footprint' area.

Conference condemns this STP process because:

- 1) The funding environment and the requirement for STPs to make a combined saving of some £22bn in England means that this is a process of planning for cost reductions rather than for service improvements;
- 2) Decision-making is being done without public scrutiny and without clear lines of democratic accountability;
- 3) Private sector employers who provide health services are in a position to get a say in the content of the STP.

Conference notes with concern that inadequate funding may result in the STPs leading to local controversies about where the deepest cuts to services should take place and resolves to:

- a) Campaign to highlight the Government's underfunding of the NHS and social care and the impact on vulnerable service users and the predominantly low-paid female workforce;
- b) Oppose local service reductions or closures, and consistently highlight the root cause in the underfunding of services by central government;
- c) Condemn the lack of openness and transparency in the formation of the STPs and call for public and staff engagement in planning future service provision;

- d) Use the avenues available at combined authority-level to promote greater investment and better employment standards in social care and health services.

*North West*

31.1

Add a final sentence at the end of the motion above:  
"Conference agrees to affiliate to 'Health Campaigns Together' which organised the massive demo in defence of the NHS on 4 March 2017 and calls on the National Executive Council to initiate national action to protect the Health Service."

*Hackney*

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### **32. Crisis in social care – call for a special conference**

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

*South East*

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### **33. STPs – the future of the NHS?**

Conference notes that despite their often bland phrasing and heavy cosmetic decoration with proposals for improved integration of services, collaboration between providers and with commissioners, and public health measures which we could all endorse, the 44 Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) in England represent proposals for over £24 billion of cuts, "efficiencies" and "savings" by 2020-21, which can only be at the expense of health workers and patients.

While some STPs pull up short of spelling out explicit plans for rationalisation, reconfiguration, back office consolidation, bed cuts and staffing reductions, most of them set course in that direction and seek to enlist local authorities in support of plans that will reduce access to services for many of the local communities they are elected to represent.

UNISON notes that while many STPs contain plans for new hospitals, expansion of existing hospitals, new community facilities and new 'digital' services, there is little or no NHS capital available to fund these developments, leaving many of them an empty promise, alongside a real plan for cuts in existing services.

UNISON opposes austerity-driven cutbacks in hospital, community and mental health services, whether

these be presented in the form of STPs or less overt moves towards reconfiguration, cost-cutting and consolidation by trusts. We agree to support national campaigns on this and campaigns to defend local access to hospital services until new, superior, alternative evidence-based services are developed, properly staffed and funded, that ensure safe and improved services for patients.

Conference also supports the TUC campaign for an end to the seven years of real terms funding freeze that is squeezing the life out of our NHS, reducing performance on key services, and undermining public confidence in the NHS – with the threat of four more years to come. Conference calls for funding to be increased immediately from the current disastrous level with further increases year by year towards the levels of comparable European and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, and for an end to the waste of billions on a competitive market system.

While endorsing the aspiration to greater integration of health and social care for the benefit of patients, UNISON notes that the application of means-tested charges for social care, the extent of the enforced cutbacks in budgets and raised eligibility thresholds, coupled with the fragmentation and privatisation of most domiciliary care and the private ownership of nursing homes prevents integration with an NHS that is still funded through general taxation and free at point of use.

Although in principle we welcome NHS England's moves to reverse, or in some cases override the Lansley Health and Social Care Act, restore strategic planning and develop a fresh collaboration between competing trusts, UNISON notes that the Act remains in place. As a result many irresponsible Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), not least in Staffordshire, are continuing to contract out services, some awarding fresh contracts to Virgin and other private sector providers even as other contracts end in failure. STPs do not reverse the Act, and cannot eradicate the divisive market system deepened in 2012.

UNISON therefore will work and campaign for new legislation, such as the NHS Reinstatement Bill, that is promoted in the Commons by Margaret Greenwood MP, to reverse the 2012 Act, dismantle the costly and wasteful NHS market system, and restore the NHS as a service publicly financed, publicly owned and publicly provided.

*Colchester Health*

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### 34. Funding For Health and Social Care Integration

Conference recognises that buried under the jargon of Sustainability and Transformation Plans, Local Care Organisations, Place-Based Plans and Geographic Footprints there may be potential opportunities for improvements in services by removing artificial barriers between health services provided by the NHS and social care services provided by local government.

However, as is all too common with any policy put forward by this ideologically driven Tory administration, a major restructure of these services combined with massive funding cuts being inflicted on them can only lead to devastated services, decimated staff numbers and worse working conditions for the overworked staff that are left.

All this is an environment where:

- 1) There have been cuts to Local Government of £11.3 billion;
- 2) Adult Social Care expects a shortfall of £2.6 billion by 2020;
- 3) The Tories are demanding a £22 billion saving from the NHS by 2020;
- 4) Nine out of ten hospitals were overcrowded last winter due to a lack of funding.

In these circumstances it is nonsensical to believe that such huge changes can be successful given these hostile conditions.

All our communities deserve quality health and social care services from across the public sector and while integration may help to provide this it can only do so when it is looked at as a programme of improvement rather than yet another chance to strip money from our essential services in order to cut taxes for the idle rich.

The top tenth of households own 45% of total UK personal wealth, while the bottom half are left to share just 9%. The poorest 1%, meanwhile, own just 0.05% of wealth. (ONS 2014 survey).

What we need is full and fair investment in our services.

Conference calls for:

- a) A fair funding formula to be immediately brought in that addresses the local social care needs of councils to provide services for the most vulnerable in society;
- b) An increase of NHS spending to match the percentage of GDP that is spent on health care by our European neighbours;
- c) A reversal of the privatisation agenda that bleeds funds from our public services;
- d) A pay policy for local government and the NHS that properly rewards staff for their vital work and ensures the necessary recruitment and retention of all staff;
- e) A Special Conference of Local Government and Health UNISON branches to consider and agree a cross-sector approach to take forward UNISON's Health and Social Care agenda and make this central to the work of the union.

*Manchester*

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34.1

Delete point e)

*National Executive Council*

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### 35. Our National Health Service is at breaking point

Conference believes that our National Health Service is at breaking point. On the backdrop of continued cuts and closures, private companies seek to gain even more of a foothold within the NHS.

Continued pay restraint has seen the value of NHS staff salaries reduce by 14% since 2010 and there are now 25,000 nursing and 3,500 midwifery vacancies in the NHS in England alone.

The Government's and NHS England's plans for £22 billion of savings represent a real risk to the safety of patients and the service.

Conference opposes the impact of the Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) which (amongst other things) are aimed at reducing beds in the acute sector with no realistic plan to provide the necessary funding to provide necessary community services, close or downgrade Accident and Emergency Departments, cut staffing levels, merge (so-called) back-office functions and extend privatisation.

The NHS is the greatest achievement of the trade union and labour movement. Conference believes that we cannot allow our NHS to be undermined and ultimately destroyed.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to support a co-ordinated campaign (by the appropriate bodies in UNISON) in England to oppose the consequences for staff of the STPs.

*South Derbyshire Healthcare*

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35.1

In the final paragraph after "oppose" replace the rest of the wording with the following: "those STPs that will create damaging consequences for staff, services and patients, which includes out-sourcing and privatisation."

*National Executive Council*

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### 36. Why we need to build a new housing consensus for affordable and decent homes for all

The never-ending UK housing crisis means that millions of workers and their families live in expensive, overcrowded and insecure homes.

Often these homes are long distances away from work or family and involve many hours of daily commutes.

Conversely UNISON research has shown many families have grown up children living with them not out of choice, but of necessity as they cannot afford to buy or rent a home of their own.

Recently the Government have announced a number of high profile schemes and incentives to fix the housing crisis. All have failed.

Home ownership is on a downwards spiral, increasingly numbers of people in work are reliant on housing benefit and the number of social housing homes available shrinks year by year.

The chief reason for this housing failure is that there is no long a political consensus in the UK on the need for direct investment and subsidy in public housing.

From 1945 to the 1970's political parties of all kinds used to compete on how many affordable homes they could build each year.

This was because there was a widespread consensus that it was the duty of the state to ensure that everyone was securely and safely housed.

In order to build homes we must rebuild this consensus.

Conference resolves to call upon the National Executive Council to campaign with other unions and residents to restore direct investment in public housing. To make the case that this is the only way to solve the housing crisis.

To ask our Labour Link to work to make a new housing consensus a top issue within the Labour Party taking into consideration the following principles:

- 1) Subsidy should be redirected from housing benefit being paid to landlords to building public homes;
- 2) Governments and councils must borrow to invest in a mass house building programme. Not only building homes but putting people back into work to build them and therefore pumping money back into the economy;
- 3) An increase in the supply of public homes would help bring down the cost of home ownership and make this a real option once again in expensive areas;
- 4) Not only should homes be well built, environmentally efficient, affordable and secure but to be in a decent condition. Public landlords including councils and housing associations must be accountable and democratic to all stakeholders including having a meaningful resident involvement and include the recognition of trade unions.

*Greater London  
Housing Associations*

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36.1

Add at end of third paragraph:

"The cuts to housing benefits have exacerbated the problem of young people being unable to move out and live independently. These cuts have also meant that young people may be forced to stay in a family setting that is hostile or even violent towards them."

Replace tenth paragraph with:

"Conference resolves to call upon the National Executive Council to:

- a) Seek to campaign with other unions and residents to restore direct investment in public housing;
  - b) Seek to ensure that ensure that young people's voices are heard in this campaign;
  - c) Make the case that this is the only way to solve the housing crisis."
- National Young Members' Forum*

36.4

After "Conference resolves to call upon the National Executive Council to campaign with . . ." insert:  
 "organisations such as Axe the Housing Act and Defend Council Housing,"

*Camden*

36.2

Insert new fourth paragraph:  
 "Conference notes that for women the housing crisis has additional elements which impact directly on their safety and wellbeing:

- a) 90% of lone parents are women, with a significant proportion of these women being low paid and living in poverty. With no access to decent social housing, these women and their children are among the most vulnerable to exploitation by unscrupulous landlords;
- b) Women attempting to escape domestic abuse or those facing relationship or family breakdowns are unable to secure safe and affordable housing, in large part due to the enormous pressure on all kinds of social housing;
- c) A recent Shelter report highlighted the issue of sex for rent landlords – offering accommodation free to women "willing" to provide sexual services in exchange. For unemployed women, those with no recourse to public funds, or simply women with no deposit or the means to pay for high private rents this can be a desperate last resort."

Add new paragraph after action point 4):  
 "Conference further calls upon the National Executive Council to work with all appropriate bodies to raise awareness of the disproportionate impact of the housing crisis on women; and to lobby and campaign for action to tackle exploitative landlords."

*National Women's Committee*

36.3

Add new paragraph after ninth paragraph (ending with "rebuild this consensus"):  
 "Conference welcomes the success of "Axe the Housing Act" and housing campaigners, trade unions, councils and councillors, residents and tenants organisations and others in defeating some of the worst elements of the Housing and Planning Act 2016, including the Tory manifesto commitment to introduce "Pay to Stay". We recognise the importance of building on those successes and of continuing to work with "Axe the Housing Act" and others and supporting initiatives such as the March for Homes on Saturday 24 June."

*Tower Hamlets*

**37. Housing Associations and Charities that refuse to recognise Trade Unions**

Conference notes:

- 1) That a number of UK housing associations and charities do not recognise trade unions for collective bargaining;
- 2) Some of these employers are union busters and have de-recognised trade unions, attacked union representatives and blacklisted union and safety activists;
- 3) The UN Charter of Human Rights, as well as International Labour Organisation (ILO) conventions, makes it clear that it is an absolute human right of all employees not only to join a trade union but also to be protected by collective bargaining agreements over jobs, pay, terms and conditions;
- 4) Any employer that refuses to recognise trade unions and is hostile to union activists and organisers is committing human rights violations and must be treated as such;
- 5) Major UK housing associations and charities have and continue to receive huge amounts of public money either in direct support, grants, benefits, subsidies, donations or taxable relief;
- 6) UNISON wants to work in partnership with employers to improve employee relations which we genuinely believe will benefit our clients, customers and workers. However we will not tolerate human rights abuses.

Conference resolves:

- a) To call upon our National Executive Council and UNISON Labour Link to support a campaign for all UK Housing associations and charities to recognise trade unions for collective bargaining. This campaign may involve taking legal industrial action if necessary in accordance with UNISON rules;
- b) If any UK housing association or charity refuses to recognise trade unions for the purposes of collective bargaining and victimises or blacklists activists and organisers then we call upon the National Executive Council and UNISON Labour link to support campaigns within our rules in favour of recognition and against such victimisation and blacklisting;
- c) If any housing association or charity refuses to respect the human rights of our members to

collective bargaining and victimised or blacklists union activists then we should as a last resort call upon the general public, local authorities and the Government to make it clear to these organisations that due to their failure to observe basic international human rights, they will review whether they are fit and proper organisations that they should work with and have procurement, partnership and other commercial arrangements with.

*Housing Associations*

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### 38. Fighting to Defend Services

Conference congratulates the Nottingham University Hospitals and Allied Services branch (NUH), UNISON East Midlands and Nottinghamshire Keep Our NHS Public for the successful campaigning that had led to the announcement that “The NUH Trust Board continues to be concerned about the performance of the Carillion contract. The Board has therefore decided that significant changes to the arrangements with Carillion are required. NUH and Carillion are jointly exploring a managed exit from the Carillion contract. NUH and Carillion are commencing discussions to determine next steps. Estates and Facilities staff will remain employed by Carillion until such time as future arrangements are agreed by both parties, which we anticipate to be January 2017. We will continue to keep our patients, partners and external stakeholders informed as there are further developments”

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Send a letter of congratulations to Nottingham University Hospitals and Allied Services branch, staff involved in the campaign at UNISON East Midlands and Nottinghamshire Keep Our NHS Public;
- 2) Offer support to branches that are campaigning against outsourcing or campaigning for outsourced functions to be brought back in-house.

*South Derbyshire Healthcare*

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## Campaigns

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### 39. Getting the public on our side – public service campaigning

Close to a decade since the beginning of the global financial crisis, the pressure on public services and those that provide them remains unrelenting. Despite the unprecedented cuts that our members and the

communities that they serve have already experienced, a raft of further measures now threaten to push services to breaking point. These include but are not limited to:

- 1) The £3bn of ‘savings’ being imposed on schools in England by 2019/20;
- 2) A growing social care funding crisis across the UK;
- 3) The funding crisis in the NHS, which the Red Cross have described as a humanitarian crisis;
- 4) Continuing cuts and redundancies in local government and police.

The backdrop for the increased pressure on public services is the continued fallout from the EU referendum result, in terms of both economic uncertainty and political turbulence, in the UK and internationally.

In this context UNISON, as the largest public services trade union, carries a heavy responsibility. Not only must the union counter the strong headwinds and continue to make the arguments for an alternative to the cuts and underinvestment that have characterised the austerity decade. We must also use our member’s experiences, campaign resources, evidence and expertise to win over wider public opinion for an alternative that properly recognises the value of properly funded public services to all of our lives.

Conference should acknowledge that winning over public opinion is a huge challenge. Although polls show strong support for the NHS, recent indications suggest that the Tories, responsible for austerity in the first place, enjoy high levels of trust as the party best suited to manage the challenges it faces. Added to this, all too often we see a dispiriting low level of concern about the pressures facing local government and public services more widely.

The UNISON public service champions campaign, launched following support for motion 26 at National Delegate Conference 2016, seeks to help address the challenge of winning over public opinion. Motion 27 passed also set out a strong anti-privatisation agenda to follow too. This campaign, supported by the General Political Fund, has sought to reignite the sense of pride we should all feel in public services, and create the conditions in which our more political messages about the need for an alternative to austerity are better received – including those already being pursued regionally, locally or related to service specific demands. The philosophy behind the campaign is that people will only fight for it if they are reminded why they should care about it.

Conference now calls on the National Executive Council to continue to pursue the champions campaign in the period ahead. This should involve:

- a) Further communications and advertising to the public that highlights the valuable work that our members undertake and the pressures that they face;
- b) Harnessing members voices from the frontline in their own words;
- c) Working with branches, regions and self-organised

- groups to ensure appropriate co-ordination with on the ground campaigns;
- d) Working with service groups on their cuts and pay campaigns;
  - e) Developing further campaign tools and materials (including digital social media) that can be used across the union to contribute to the campaign;
  - f) Lobbying politicians at all levels to stand up for public services and those that provide them;
  - g) Building to the 2020 general election so that there is mass accumulation of voters ready to vote for public services;
  - h) Evaluating the effectiveness of the campaign.

*National Executive Council*

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39.1

At the end of the third paragraph, delete “lives.” and insert:

“lives and the vital importance of services that meet the needs of our diverse communities.”

In the fifth paragraph, third sentence, delete “locally or related to service specific demands.” And insert:

“locally, related to service specific demands or related to the impact of austerity on minority public services, such as services targeted at LGBT people.”

After existing point c), insert new points as follows and renumber remaining action points accordingly:

“d) Working with the national SOG committees and National Young Members Forum to ensure the appropriate inclusion of minority public services in the champions campaign;

e) Taking the campaign out into communities, including UNISON attendance at national, regional and local community events such as Pride events and community festivals;”

*National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee*

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39.2

Delete paragraph four (“Conference should acknowledge...”), replace with:

“Many people recognise and value public services, provided directly by local government, the NHS and other national funding organisations. Working people have always favoured public services being public i.e. provided for social need rather than profit. The difficulty is to win the battle that public services at their current level are required when “there is no money” or “savings have to be found”. This is particularly difficult if council taxes or regressive forms of taxation “have to rise” to cover the “rising costs.” People are faced with a false choice of cuts to services or further impoverishment with local tax increases, often

shamefully implemented by Labour councils.

A joined-up campaign to defend and fight for public services has to be linked to the strategy of councillors and elected representatives of the labour movement demanding more funding, but for this to be taken from the rich, not working people. There are easily enough resources in society to adequately fund services and provide decent rewards for our members, but this point needs to be made forcefully and confidently.

Linking proper funding for public services with nationalisation of key services and an effective clawing back of wealth from the 1% in society, could be a something which UNISON’s leadership and the labour and trade union movement as a whole can articulate, for a coherent campaign to be built.”

After point g) add new point h):

“h) Making it clear that UNISON’s position is for fully funded public services paid for by significant taxation of the rich, rather than further regressive taxation.”

Renumber point h) as i).

*University of Brighton*

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39.3

In action point c) after “regions” insert the following: “, retired members”

*National Retired Members’ Committee*

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## **40. Public Service Champions Recruitment Campaign**

Conference applauds UNISON’s Public Service Champions Campaign launched in 2016 to stand up for the people who deliver public services – our members and potential members.

The high profile adverts, designed to highlight the experience of people who use our public services every day have been welcomed by members. The adverts show how lives are saved, children educated, older people cared for at home or younger people given vital life chances, by the dedication of a whole team of public service workers, often behind the scenes.

Conference believes that the campaign has done much to raise awareness of the importance of public services amongst the general public and to raise the status of the public service workforce. The impact of the campaign has been felt not just amongst the general public but amongst public service workers themselves who have for too long been undervalued by politicians and the public for the vital work they do.

Conference further believes there is value in extending this campaign to include dedicated days throughout the year when ‘action’ can be organised to raise awareness and the status of a range of public

service occupations in the eyes of our members and the general public and recruit members into UNISON e.g. a day of ‘action’ aimed at raising awareness of the vital work cleaning staff do to keep our public buildings and spaces clean. ‘Action’ would be designed to highlight the importance of cleaning in our hospitals, our schools, our streets etc, who does this work and for what reward and recognition and could be linked to specific recruitment and/or organising objectives e.g. payment of a real living wage. The model could be replicated across a range of public service occupations e.g. caring, catering, administration etc. and would form a link between UNISON’s campaign to defend public services and our need to recruit and organise public service workers.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to facilitate discussion across Service Groups on the organisation of a number of days of ‘action’ across a range of occupational groups designed to underpin the ethos of public service and to recruit and organise public service workers.

*East Midlands*

- 4) Continue to work with branches, UNISON Regions, Labour Link and the General Political Fund to build local political campaigns behind UNISON’s Objectives that win in the workplace and the ballot box and that inspire a new generation of union activists.

*Cymru/Wales*

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41.1

Add new third paragraph:

“Conference rejects any argument that large scale industrial action ballots involving thousands of workers are now “impossible” to win due to low turnouts. Clear national leadership, the development of strong workplace organisation and the encouragement of mass participation in the campaign to win a ballot can drive up turnouts despite the obstacles presented by the Act.”

In point 1) delete “oppose” and replace with: “campaign against”

*London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority*

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#### 41. Challenging the Trade Union Act 2016

Conference continues to condemn the Trade Union Act 2016 in Great Britain and its various restrictive and draconian regulations to hamper the ability of unions to bargain and to advance pay and conditions in the workplace. In Wales the Act was opposed by the Wales Assembly Government and nearly every local council and health board because of its specific focus on public service trade unionism. Conference, therefore welcomes the Wales Assembly Government seeking to pass their own Trade Union Act to control industrial relations in devolved public services in areas of industrial action in ‘important public services’, facility time and the payment of union subs through pay-roll check off.

Conference notes that there are many employers, not only in Wales, willing to work with trade unions to improve services for the public and who recognise the value of trade unions. The motivation for the Wales Government proposing its own legislation was the success of its public services Workforce Partnership Council in improving services and industrial relations.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to oppose the Trade Union Act and seek its repeal at the earliest opportunity;
- 2) Promote the value of facility time so that if employers have to record its deployment it is in terms of the considerable benefits not just costs;
- 3) Recognise that away from the Westminster parliament there are important institutions and politicians with their own democratic mandates and positive commitment to trade unionism;

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#### 42. Media Portrayal of Older People

Conference notes with concern the negative and profoundly damaging images of older people, both as individuals and collectively, that are continually and consistently put out by the mass media in Britain. This includes portrayal of the age group as having access to large pensions, doing little that is worthwhile and at the same time being a drain on society’s resources and a burden on younger generations. The media and politicians have whipped up a “phony war” between young and old implying that pensioners have escaped the worst impacts of the austerity measures at the expense of the younger generation.

This attitude is illustrated by the following statement issued by the Work and Pensions Select Committee to launch its inquiry into intergenerational fairness: “the current generation of people in or approaching retirement will over the course of their lifetimes have enjoyed and accumulated much more housing and financial wealth, public service usage, and welfare and pension entitlements than more recent generations can hope to receive”.

During the past year, elements of the media seem aggressively intent on portraying older people in a negative manner, claiming that hard-won benefits such as free prescriptions, winter fuel allowance and bus passes give pensioners an undeserved privileged position in society. The implication is that some of them should be withdrawn. In truth we know that for many, such benefits make the difference between a frugal lifestyle and one of poverty.

Conference does not believe that pensioners have escaped austerity and notes the following facts:

- 1) Almost 40% of those aged 65 and over in the UK experienced poverty at least once between 2010 and 2013, compared with around 30% of those under 65;
- 2) 42% of older people in the UK said they have struggled to afford essential items such as food, gas, electricity;
- 3) Cuts to adult social care budgets mean that 1.5 million older people in England have care and support needs that the state does not meet and either have to fund themselves or go without;
- 4) Meals on wheels services have been reduced over the last five years from 300,000 to just 109,000. At the same time, the average price of a meal has increased by 22% and malnutrition among older people costs the NHS an estimated £13 billion a year.

Far from enjoying gold plated pensions and untold wealth, millions are living in poverty or fear of poverty. Services on which the majority of older people disproportionately rely have been cut or are under threat. Pensions and benefits have so declined in value that even basic needs cannot be met and thousands die each winter from cold related causes. At the same time the contribution of unpaid labour by older people is a vital part of the bedrock of society without which families and communities could not survive.

Indeed, comparing a pension to a benefit drives retirees 'up the wall' as they have worked all their life for it, said Steve Webb when he was the Pensions Minister in 2014. He also said that people earn their state pension throughout their working lives by paying their national insurance contributions and feel "stigmatised" by the idea they are claiming benefits. In 2016 nothing has changed much, where both the government and news media still fail to recognise the fact that most of today's pensioners are receiving a return on their investment in the state and not some form of hand-out, and continue to portray those in receipt of pensioner entitlements in much the same way as other traditional benefits.

Quite often the media seeks to draw an unfair comparison between pensioner entitlements and the wider working community, failing to recognise the many years of hard work put in by most of today's pensioners to earn the right to receive a decent pension, concessionary travel and free prescriptions.

Conference is concerned that the myths about wealthy pensioners immune to the effects of the austerity measures will be used to attack the universal benefits which improve the quality of life for many older people.

Conference believes that the myths must be challenged at every opportunity. In reality, means-testing the winter fuel allowance would have little impact on intergenerational inequality; and there has never been any data to show that 18 year olds are demanding that their grandparents' bus passes or winter fuel allowances

should be taken away.

Maligning pensioners has become a media habit and Conference needs to combat this attitude urgently. We are in a difficult position in that we can't withdraw our labour to make the point but we can counter the attacks by stating the truth. Many of us have been in paid employment for many years, perhaps raised a family and maybe engaged in house purchase. During this time, we have fully met our obligations to the tax system and indeed continue to do so. Who are these people supposedly deprived by us avaricious pensioners? Is it our families, those we most value and support? Are they complaining about us being given more than our share? Of course they are not. They, like us, know it for the nonsense it is.

Also, Conference welcomes the Trades Union Congress publication, "Young against Old? What's really causing Wealth Inequality?" which argues that:

- a) The principal factors leading to wealth inequality are housing tenure, geography and earnings, not age. The wealthiest households are mainly of working age, not pensioners, and there is no good reason to target pensioners in order to increase support for young people;
- b) Means-testing or reducing public spending on older people would have little impact on young people's long-term prospects; and,
- c) The main factors influencing whether young and middle aged people can accumulate wealth through property and pensions are wage levels, job security and housing tenure not public spending.

The truth as stated earlier this year in the excellent National Pensioners Convention submission to the Works and Pensions Select Committee is that the contribution made by pensioners to our society every year vastly exceeds the cost of pensioner benefits by billions of pounds.

Conference is alarmed at the impact of this coverage which creates discord between generations, builds resentment and hostility and promotes and supports discrimination against and exploitation of older people. It significantly increases their vulnerability, leaving them open to abuse by family and strangers. It derecognises the potential of their energy, knowledge, skills and wisdom from which society could so much benefit.

Further, older people are characterised as being "behind the times", unable and unwilling to communicate through modern technologies and hence as being in a large measure responsible for their own isolation. They are disproportionately depicted as victims and objects of pity. Their economic, social and cultural contribution to society, past and present, is largely ignored. They are under-represented as authors, experts and contributors to the public arena. Older women LGBT people and Black people are particularly vulnerable both to negative imagery and "invisibility".

Conference urges the National Executive Council

to campaign vigorously with the government and news media to change the way pensions and other entitlements are promoted and reported to the general public. It calls on the National Executive Council to:

- i) Work closely with the National Pensioners Convention, Trades Union Congress, Scottish Trades Union Congress, Scottish Pensioners Forum, other trades unions and relevant organisations to gain support for a campaign seeking to ensure that positive and diverse images of older people are maintained and strengthened in our union, the wider labour movement and in society;
- ii) Urgently organise a campaign strategy to make our concerns known to the relevant media sources;
- iii) Make the TUC publication “Young against Old?” widely available; use the electronic replacement for Interactive to promote it; ensure its main arguments are reflected in the UNISON Charter for Older People, once reprinted; and, seek ways to make common cause with the Young Members’ Organisation on these issues;
- iv) Raise the awareness of working and retired members of UNISON of the myths that are peddled by the media, their purpose and divisiveness and how to campaign against them;
- v) Encourage and support all UNISON members and organisations, and particularly its retired members sections, in countering local and national media on ageism and misrepresentation of older people and replacing it with positive coverage;
- vi) Work with UNISON’s National Young Members’ Forum to dispel the myths outlined above and to promote intergenerational fairness;
- vii) Report progress on a regular basis in UNISON publications and keep regions and branches informed;
- viii) Fight to preserve pensioners’ rights for future generations.

*National Retired Members’ Committee*

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#### **43. Stop the State Visit of Trump**

Conference notes:

- 1) Within hours of allegedly cementing the UK governments “special relations” with Donald Trump and his billionaire’s government, Trump implemented his Ban on Muslims and attack on Refugees;
- 2) The ban immediately provoked massive demonstrations of US workers blocking the airports in defence of refugees and muslims. The following day tens of thousands took to the streets of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland in solidarity protests demanding a ban on Trump until

the ban on Muslims was lifted. This follows on from the mass worldwide protests against his attacks on women and LGBT rights;

- 3) Despite this the Tory Government has confirmed their intention to have a full state visit to UK paid for at the tax payer’s expense. For the Tory government the rights of refugees and Muslims are secondary to their desire to secure and protect the profits of big business through new neo-liberal trade agreements no matter what the consequences are for workers in the US and UK.

Conference calls on the government to rescind the invitation. However, should the visit go ahead, Conference gives full backing and support to the protests and demonstrations called in opposition to the visit.

*Salford City*

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#### 43.1

In final sentence of point 2) after “attacks on women” add “, disability, Black”

Insert new point 4):

“4) The support the General Political Fund has given the Stop Trump UK coalition to organise demonstrations across the UK.”

*National Executive Council*

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Despite this the Tory government has confirmed their intention to have a full state visit to UK paid for at the tax payer’s expense. For the Tory government the rights of refugees and muslims are secondary to their desire to secure and protect the profits of big business through new neo-liberal trade agreements no matter what the consequences are for workers in the US and UK.

Conference calls on the government to rescind the invitation, however should the visit go ahead Conference gives full backing and support to the protests and demonstrations called in opposition to the visit.

*Nottingham City  
Wolverhampton*

44.1

In final sentence of second paragraph after “attacks on women” add “, disability, Black”

Add new fourth paragraph:

“Conference welcomes the support the UNISON General Political Fund has given Stop Trump UK coalition to organise demonstrations across the UK.”

*National Executive Council*

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#### 45. Trump Visit

Conference notes Theresa May’s sycophantic love-in with Donald Trump has been greeted with revulsion, anger and, most importantly, a determination to fight back.

As the disgusting and racist US ‘Muslim ban’ came into effect, protests called at less than 48 hours’ notice numbered in the tens of thousands across the UK. These followed on from the huge mobilisations that took place to mark Trump’s inauguration, including the global ‘women’s marches’.

Across Britain, working class and young people feel a tremendous sense of solidarity with the millions of Americans who are taking the fight to this billionaire president for billionaires, as well as with all those who are being victimised by his vile reactionary policies.

UNISON general secretary Dave Prentis said: “There should be no open arms welcome for Donald Trump. When running for the White House he made the most appalling sexist and racist comments, and those same vile sentiments are now shaping the executive orders he’s signing as President. Protecting him from the inevitable protestors will cost millions – something the cash-strapped UK can ill afford.”

At this stage, it seems likely that Trump will visit Britain in the late summer or early autumn of 2017, when universities are likely to be at their quietest. However, students and young people will be at the forefront of what is likely to be a major protest against everything Trump stands for if the visit does take place.

UNISON needs to be involved in anti-Trump protests and willing to give a lead to members who want to show their opposition to racism, sexism and bigotry. A large trade union cannot afford to be passive, leaving University and College Union (UCU) and National Union of Students (NUS) to be seen as the main opponents of Trump.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to seek to work with other trade unions and NUS to campaign for a mass mobilisation of trade unionists and students in the event of a Trump visit.

*University of Brighton*

45.1

Delete second sentence of sixth paragraph and replace with:

“Conference therefore welcomes the £10,000 donation from the General Political Fund that enabled the Stop Trump UK coalition to hold demonstrations and rallies with UNISON speakers across the country on February 20th, the day the nearly 2 million strong petition against the state visit was debated in parliament.”

*National Executive Council*

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#### 46. Organ Donation

Conference notes medical science has pioneered relentlessly for many years, to extend and improve human life, Organ, and tissue donation is no exception. However what is the exception is the lack of publicity given to organ and tissue donation, there is literally thousands of people waiting for a donation, for: kidney, heart, liver, lungs, also for pancreas, small bowel, tissue as corneas, heart valve, skin and bone. In fact the NHS organ donation and transplant activity data, for the United Kingdom records on the 13th October 2016, the number of patients currently, on the transplant list is 6,599. Whereas in 2013, the figure was 7,313, although the figures suggest donors are being found, there are by far many, many, more urgently required.

Conference believes awareness of organ donor was needed yesterday, highlighting organ donation will make a difference to recipients’ life, without organ donation patients, have numerous hospital trips a week for transplant and treatment, or for other associated health ailments, and ultimately their fight for life may end in death. Alongside the myths, scepticism, fear, ethical and religious questions, the NHS website has plenty of accessible information, and does address the questions, of “am I too old to donate an organ?” “It’s against my religion” “the medics won’t make sure I’m dead before they remove my organs “

If the medical professions decide to use a donor, in the first instance consent is sought, all of the process involved and decisions is governed by a strict criterion.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council:

- 1) To highlight via UNISON national publication, the importance and different types of organ donations;
- 2) Invite medical professionals to raise awareness at a fringe or workshop or to have an information stand at National Delegate Conference 2018.

*Birmingham*

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#### 47. Defend Whistleblowing

On 2 February 2017, the Law Commission published its consultation paper, Protection of Official

Data, also known as the Espionage Act. The paper outlines the Commission's views on existing legislation governing the disclosure of information and how this can be improved.

Following the document being officially tabled as a proposal it has been roundly criticised by human rights groups such as Liberty, Policy Transparency International UK and the Open Rights Group who see it as an attack on whistleblowing and public interest disclosure.

Through a combination of poor definitions, vague terminology and a commitment to increased encroachment on the rights and freedoms of those who may have just cause to disclose information, the proposals have far reaching consequences for citizens across the UK.

Of primary concern is the fact that the framework will discourage legitimate whistleblowing as the Law Commission would like to remove the right to a statutory public interest defence, increase penalties and seek to criminalise other relevant parties who receive disclosed information such as journalists, politicians and any other relevant unauthorised persons.

UNISON has strove to ensure that the benefits of whistleblowing are both recognised and encouraged across the public sector and suitable mechanisms exist for staff to make disclosures.

Conference calls on UNISON's National Executive Council to examine the impact of the proposals in the public sector and to campaign within the UK Parliament rejecting proposals which attempt to erode the rights and protections of whistleblowers.

*Police Staff Scotland*

- 4) organisations that should be paying workers proper wages;
- 5) Representation for unemployed workers. Everyone should have access to an advocate to help them navigate the social security system and appeal adverse decisions;
- 6) Appoint an Ombudsman for claimants. A Claimants Ombudsman should be appointed to arbitrate on unresolved complaints, to ensure claimants are treated with respect and dignity;
- 7) Equality in the labour market and workplace; equality in access to benefits. We need a labour market where structural inequalities are overturned and a benefit system that is accessible to people;
- 8) An end to the sanctions regime and current Work Capability Assessment - full maintenance for the unemployed and underemployed. We need a non-means tested, non-discriminatory benefit payable to all, with housing costs met. This must be allied with the wide provision of low cost housing;
- 9) State provision of high quality information, advice and guidance on employment, training and careers. There must be a supportive and independent careers and job-broking service, not linked to conditionality or benefits, offering face to face advice.

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

*Salford City*

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#### 48. Support the Welfare Charter

The United Kingdom is one of the richest countries on earth. One million people use foodbanks, more than a quarter of children live in poverty, and 5.5 million adults go without one or more basic clothing necessities, like a warm, waterproof coat.

Through the TUC Unemployed Workers Centres a Welfare Charter has been established, which calls for:

- 1) A political commitment to full employment achieved with decent jobs. People are entitled to decent, stable and secure jobs that provide regular, guaranteed hours that allows them to also meet any caring responsibilities; not zero hours contracts in precarious jobs;
- 2) A wage you can live on for all and a social security system that works to end poverty. We need a National Living Wage that people can live on, not just survive on, that applies to all;
- 3) No work conscription – keep volunteering voluntary. Forcing people to work for free on pain of losing benefits is simply providing free labour to

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### Economy

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#### 49. Challenging the new Conservative economic agenda

Following the EU referendum, a new Conservative Prime Minister and Chancellor have come to power – yet this new government are continuing to persevere with the same austerity agenda pursued by the previous Conservative administration.

Conference notes that the Chancellor failed to mention public services or provide any additional funding for the NHS, social care or local government in the Autumn Statement - his first opportunity to show a genuine change from his predecessor.

Conference notes that the government's economic agenda continues to fail working people and damage

living standards. The Institute for Fiscal Studies has said that this is “the worst decade for living standards certainly since the last war and probably since the 1920s”.

Conference notes that the government’s claims to help those who are “Just About Managing” doesn’t extend to public service workers, who are still hit by the government’s punishing 1% pay cap.

The pay misery continues as wages lag behind rising food and fuel prices, causing real financial hardship.

Conference notes that the government persists in calling the new over-25s National Minimum Wage the “Living Wage” when in fact the wage rate set by the government is far below the real Living Wage.

Conference notes that the government has continually failed to solve the housing crisis – which has a disproportionate impact on public service workers in areas of high housing demand, which is nearly the entire country.

Conference notes that the future economic climate remains uncertain – in particular with the UK likely to exit the EU single market and the Bank of England forecasts a rise in consumer prices.

Conference notes that the government have so-far failed to spell out a convincing industrial strategy for the country post-EU Exit.

Conference notes that the Trade Unions Share Owners group (TUSO) are using shareholder power as a means of highlighting and tackling unethical corporate behaviour in companies such as Sports Direct.

Conference believes that the ‘new’ Conservative economic agenda is no different to that pursued by the administration of the previous Prime Minister – namely, ideologically driven austerity, attacks on public services and on the pay and conditions of public service workers.

Conference believes that there is a risk that the UK will seek to become an offshore tax-haven with huge and damaging impacts for our society and public services alike.

Conference believes that if the government were really interested in tackling the problems of those who are “just about managing” they would reverse so-called “pay restraint” in the public sector and invest in the public services that our communities rely on.

Conference believes that it is vital to make the case for better funded public services, paid for through “progressive taxation” where the greatest contribution is made by those individuals and companies with the greatest means and assets.

Conference believes that a Robin Hood Tax could raise much needed tax revenue. Such a tax would also mean that the financial sector would fund public services, rather than cuts to public services continuing to pay for the mistakes of the financial sector.

Conference believes that with the UK’s EU Exit on the horizon, the government has failed to develop a long-term economic plan that will secure the future of the UK economy – and our public services – outside of the EU.

Conference further believes that the government

has failed to adequately plan for a post-EU Exit economy, and is placing the UK economy – and public services funded through tax revenues – in peril by prioritising an exit from the EU single market.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign for the fair funding of public services – and an end to punishing austerity – through progressive taxation and reversing corporation tax cuts;
- 2) Ensure the campaign is linked in to UNISON’s wider anti-austerity campaigning for public services in a way understandable to members and the public;
- 3) Continue campaigning for an end to the punitive public sector pay cap, and boost collective bargaining as a means of tackling wage inequality and regional pay disparities;
- 4) Campaign to oppose the myth that higher taxes are a punishment and encourage people to view taxation as contributions towards the provision of excellent public services for everyone;
- 5) Continue to campaign for a Robin Hood Tax on financial transactions;
- 6) Campaign for a real living wage across the UK – and highlight the gap between the real living wage and the government’s artificial living wage;
- 7) Campaign for a council and housing association building program, and additional support for public service worker housing schemes;
- 8) Explore new models of corporate governance and continue to support the work of TUSO and others using share ownership to take on unethical business practices;
- 9) Work with Labour Link and the General Political Fund to develop an economic policy which rejects austerity, but ensures a credible and robust plan for UK Government and the devolved institutions. This should include engagement on industrial strategy and reforming the government’s tax base to ensure properly funded public services, job security, decent pay and a rise in living standards;
- 10) Where possible to link and coordinate such campaigns across sectors and unions through the TUC, STUC, WTUC and ICTU.

*National Executive Council*

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49.1

Insert new twelfth paragraph after “...conditions of public service workers.”:

“Conference condemns Chancellor Philip Hammond’s continuation of unfair and regressive tax and benefit changes that penalise low and middle income households. The continued freeze in working-age benefit payments will reduce living standards as inflation is predicted to be 2.5-3%. Some households will

be especially hard-hit by limiting state support in the tax credit and Universal Credit systems to just two children, reductions in entitlements to Employment and Support Allowance, and the vindictive household benefits cap. Meanwhile, increases in personal tax allowances will cost the Government £2bn with 80% of the gains from this policy going to the richest half of households. Conference believes that the decisions taken by Hammond and May show that their rhetoric about social inclusion and helping the ‘just-about-managing’ is phoney.”

Insert new action point 7) and renumber accordingly:

“7) Campaign against cuts to welfare benefits, highlighting the regressive nature of Government tax and benefit policies, and the importance of benefits to working people – both as safety net and income supplement. Forcefully make the argument that people who are in and out of work have common interests, and resist efforts by the Government to encourage division and resentment.”

*Halton*

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49.2

In point 1) after “progressive taxation” delete “and” and insert: “,”

Add at end of point 1):

“and serious and determined action by government to end tax avoidance and evasion by big companies and rich individuals.”

*London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority*

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49.3

Add new point 11):

“11) To join with the People’s Assembly and other campaigns in calling a mass protest at the Tory Party Conference in Manchester on Sunday 1 October, and to call on the TUC to also support it.”

*Tower Hamlets*

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## 50. Universal Basic Income

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

The idea is that every single citizen, as a non-withdrawable right, receives a guaranteed monthly income that is sufficient to cover the basics for survival. Firstly it could almost eradicate urgent poverty. It removes the disincentive to work that can be experienced with traditional welfare systems in which benefits are lost as

earnings rise. Removing means-testing would save a huge amount of bureaucracy, errors and non-take-up. Education and health outcomes could improve which would also create savings for society as well as improving people’s living standards considerably.

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

UBI would give people dignity, a secure floor to stand on, and relief from stress. It’s simple, fair and unifying – it ends divisive narratives about who does or doesn’t deserve to eat or have shelter. Many more of us would be able to job share. Our members could find more time and energy to be active in the union, or do other volunteering. The economy gets a kickstart as people have more to spend.

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

Conference notes the recent position adopted by the GMB, Unite and the TUC to campaign for UBI, and the intention of the Labour party to look into the policy. Conference also notes that Universal Basic Income was the top reprioritised motion from the West Midlands at National Delegate Conference 2016 and that the West Midlands region has asked the candidates for Regional Mayor to run a trial UBI pilot.

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

It’s important that UNISON’s voice is not overlooked in the growing debate about practicalities and therefore Conference instructs the National Executive Council to begin looking at the idea in more detail, with particular consideration given to the following questions:

- 1) The ideal level that a UBI should be set at for it to have a positive impact on poverty, health, work-life balance, equalities and people’s ability to participate in public life;
- 2) What complementary policies and services would need to accompany a UBI to ensure that its impact is progressive (noting that there are differing versions of UBI, some of which are supported by those on the political right);
- 3) That would be UNISON’s favoured method of funding a UBI, not limited to income tax but including new revenue streams that do not as yet exist?

*West Midlands*

50.1

Delete seventh paragraph and replace with:  
 “Conference affirms that UNISON has a long tradition of campaigning for a living wage, a decent social security system, collectively provided public services for those according to their needs, progressive taxation and a more equal society. Therefore Universal Basic Income is a proposal worth consideration and debate.”

*National Executive Council*

50.2

Add new points 4), 5) and 6):

“4) Which existing means tested state benefits would be phased out, such as Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit and Tax Credits;

5) Would there need to be local and regional weighting to reflect different housing and living costs;

6) Would there be any effect on services and state benefits for disabled citizens.”

*National Executive Council*

## 51. Automation

Conference notes that automation and digitisation of jobs is changing the nature, quality, and distribution of employment, not just within sectors such as manufacturing and distribution, but in the sphere of public services too.

Conference also notes that a number of recent studies predict that between 25% and 40% of current UK jobs could be lost to automation and digitisation; and that a specific study by the Reform think-tank predicts that 250,000 job losses will come from public service employers in the sectors that UNISON represents.

In addition, Conference notes that even jobs in public services that are not lost due to automation and digitisation could be changed and restructured due to the implementation of new technologies.

Conference believes that the use of new technologies could be a positive development and improve the lives and work of UNISON members.

However, this can only be the case if the technology is developed and implemented taking into account the interests and needs of workers. Recent examples, such as the ‘staff tracking’ technology introduced into Amazon warehouses and work practices in the so-called gig economy, have shown that there is strong potential for new technologies to impact negatively on workers if controlled and implemented in the interests and needs of employers only. Whilst these negative impacts have emerged in the manufacturing and distribution sectors, the potential for these to cross over to organisations

providing public services is great.

Conference resolves to:

- 1) Instruct UNISON to set up a national working group or commission to investigate and analyse both the potential positive and negative impacts of new technologies, automation and digitisation on UNISON members and public services in general;
- 2) This working group or commission will consider the impact of public service job losses due to automation and digitisation, transitions to new technologies, and potential responses. This should include an analysis of the current social security systems, and potential alternatives such as basic income, as a response to potential job losses within the public sector;
- 3) Provide resources and training to enable branches to assess their members’ risk and vulnerability to negative impacts of automation, and to assess the effect on staffing levels and terms and conditions.

*South West*

51.1

Insert new point 3) and renumber accordingly:

“3) Ask the National Executive Council to continue to examine the organising challenges posed by platform companies such as Uber, which are already being copied in the field of social care, and their use of bogus self employment and reliance on gig employment. And hence to prioritise this important work as part of its overall review of automation and digitalisation so that the union’s organising strategy meets the new challenges ahead;”

*National Executive Council*

## 52. Automation in the Public Sector

In October 2016 Deloitte published their annual ‘State of the State’ report. It received widespread media coverage due to the sensational headline of up to 861,000 public sector job losses (16% of the overall workforce) due to automation by 2030.

The findings are based on; three separate categories of jobs, the predicted job growth and the probability of a role being automated. It is predicted the loss of jobs will reduce the public sector wage bill by £17 billion approaching 2030.

Whilst it is anticipated there are less jobs within the public sector which can be automated this will have a significant impact on redundancies and tax receipts, especially when the wider impact of automation on the UK workforce is considered.

The Governor of the Bank of England, Mark Carney, predicts 15 million jobs (40% of the UK workforce) could be automated in a generation.

Deloittes are optimistic that automation will be used to enhance and enable the creation of higher skilled, better paid jobs but there are significant risks and problems associated with how automation is managed and the implications this will have for UK society approaching 2030.

Conference calls on UNISON's National Executive Council to form a working group to examine the impact of automation in the public sector and how the wider automation of work will impact on the public sector.

Conference calls on UNISON's National Executive Council to develop strategies from the findings which will inform and shape the debate and use of automation in workplaces going forward.

*Police Staff Scotland*

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52.1

Insert new penultimate paragraph:

"Conference asks the National Executive Council to continue to examine the organising challenges posed by platform companies such as Uber, which are already being copied in the field of social care, and their use of bogus self employment and reliance on gig employment. Conference resolves to prioritise this important work as part of its overall review of automation and digitalisation so that the union's organising strategy meets the new challenges ahead."

*National Executive Council*

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## Employment Rights

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### 53. Fighting Insecure Work

Conference notes recent TUC research which found that one in ten UK workers, 3.2 million people, work in casual, agency, zero hour contracts or low paid self employment. They, and many more, face job insecurity, in-work poverty and workplace exploitation. This mushrooming shadow economy not only erodes the bargaining power of ordinary workers and degrades people's expectations of their treatment within the workplace, it has long term implications for the political, economic and social health of the entire country.

Conference notes that the TUC research found that:

- 1) 1.5 million people are now at risk of missing out on family-friendly rights including rights to maternity, paternity, adoption and shared parental leave (including the right return to their job after the time off) and the right to request to work flexibly, an increase of 700,000 compared to a decade ago;

- 2) In addition, there are 1.7 million self-employed people who lack access to these rights, and whose low pay means they cannot afford to protect themselves against the risk this creates;
- 3) 1.5 million may have no right to an itemised pay slip, making it more difficult to receive the correct pay, an increase of 700,000 compared to a decade ago. These 1.5 million may also be missing out on protection from unfair dismissal;
- 4) Nearly 500,000 people on a zero-hours contract or in insecure temporary work do not qualify for Statutory Sick Pay because they earn less than £112 a week, nearly a third of all those in this category;
- 5) These workers are also excluded from full maternity pay and have no right to paternity pay;
- 6) There is also no right for these workers to be automatically enrolled into a workplace pension.

Conference believes that precarious work exacerbates the imbalances of power which is already a feature of workplaces in the UK. Employers are able to define 'flexibility' to their advantage at the cost of an employee's ability to say no to bad pay and detrimental conditions as well as holding a potent weapon against any challenge in the form of withholding work. There is a general and justified fear amongst agency and zero hours contract workers that if they do not accept work pattern changes that they will get minimal or no hours allocated the following week or month. In the same way they feel they themselves cannot even request changes to schedules for fear of a later drop in hours and hence income. Conference believes that the nature of such work and the wage patterns it produces contributes to the growing inequality in this country.

The experience of working within such exploitative terms and conditions of service can fundamentally reshape people's experiences of work, lowering expectations and increasing tolerance of bad treatment. Low pay and insecure employment can also lead to debt, increasing the likelihood that once workers become even more vulnerable to low paid, insecure work and less able to challenge bad practices in the workplace, particularly poor health and safety. This has been compounded by the introduction of employment tribunal fees has further removed the ability of workers to tackle bad employers and access workplace justice. Fees have significantly reduced the likelihood of employers facing individual enforcement action. Since the introduction of fees in 2013 in Great Britain there has been a 70 per cent drop in tribunal claims.

Conference believes that the Government's approach to the problem of widespread non-compliance with the NMW in the care sector is not fit for purpose. The National Audit Office has reported that up to 220,000 homecare workers in England are illegally paid below the National Minimum Wage. An

investigation by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) of care providers between 2011 and 2013 found that 50% were guilty of non-compliance with the National Minimum Wage. The Resolution Foundation has calculated that care workers are collectively cheated of £130m a year due to sub minimum pay. Yet since the commencement of naming and shaming of employers by the Department for Business Innovation and Skill in 2014 only 36 separate social care providers have been exposed. Arrears of £86,075 have been identified for a total of just 646 workers. The Government still primarily relies upon care workers ringing the HMRC's Pay and Rights Helpline before they will investigate care providers for non-compliance. However, many care workers are fearful of reporting their employer in case it jeopardises their employment, as a large proportion are now employed on zero hours contracts. The use of confusing and impenetrable pay slips by care employers is used to help mask non-compliance with the minimum wage and prevents care workers from receiving the pay that they are entitled to. Faced with growing pressure from UNISON to comply with minimum wage laws many care companies are now claiming they cannot afford to pay their workers legally. Conference condemns the actions of these care providers who have exploited their workforce for years.

Conference also notes that the entrenchment of women workers in insecure, low paid, part time work is often treated as a normal feature of the labour market rather than as a continuing injustice. Almost half of UNISON's one million women members work part time. Some occupations like hospital domestics and school meals workers, are nearly all part time and are almost exclusively posts occupied by women - four times as many women than men work part time. Whilst part time work is often the only option for women seeking to balance homecare and childcare commitments with an income, there is, quite literally, a price to be paid, as the gender pay gap for women part time workers is significantly wider than that for full time women workers (as compared to full time men). There is a clear necessity for more quality part time working options. Conference believes that part time workers must have a right to equal pay for work of equal value; equal rights to bonus and other pay enhancements; equal access to fair pensions; and equal access to quality training and promotion.

Conference welcomes the new Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) and its extended remit for tackling exploitation across the labour market. However, Conference is deeply concerned about a lack of new resources for an expanded remit. The current activities of the existing enforcement agencies are already stretched and there is no indication of additional funding being made available for the new enforcement

framework and activities. If additional funding is not made available then resources will be diverted from existing compliance and enforcement work.

Conference believes that action to tackle the growth of insecure and low paid work cannot rely on individual workers in the most precarious of circumstances raising complaints about their employers. They do so risking their livelihoods and their family's future and for migrant workers, at the threat of deportation.

Conference calls for strong enforcement action, greater coverage of employment rights for all workers and most crucially, strengthened collective bargaining across the labour market. This includes:

- a) Reforming employment status laws and rules to ensure that all workers benefit from the same basic floor of rights at work;
- b) Measures to ensure that workers in low paid jobs do not lose out on key safeguards when they are unable to work, due to sickness, maternity and paternity leave or in retirement;
- c) Increasing minimum wage enforcement by HMRC;
- d) Increasing access to workplace justice by scrapping employment tribunal fees in Great Britain;
- e) Giving trade unions the right to make formal complaints and trigger minimum wage investigations without naming individual workers;
- f) Proper resourcing and funding for the new GLAA;
- g) Improving health workplace health and safety inspections;
- h) Regulating not just abuses of zero hours or short hours contracts but also measures to ensure that all who want them get a regular hours contract;
- i) Strengthen workplace level bargaining and campaigning to tackle discrimination and workplace injustice;
- j) Promote greater collective bargaining coverage across the labour market;
- k) Meaningful and transparent pay slips for workers in the care sector;
- l) Increased resources for health and safety.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- i) Work with the TUC, STUC, WTUC and ICTU to campaign for a framework of measures to promote collective bargaining, union recognition, clear consultation rights and trade union organising;
- ii) Negotiate for public authorities to take responsibility for their procurement practises and to have decent standards for in-house teams and contracted staff;
- iii) Influence the Westminster Government, devolved administrations and other workplace regulators to promote effective action and resources for enforcement to tackle labour market exploitation;

- iv) Campaign at national, regional and local level to ensure that workers rights are not weakened or undermined when the UK leaves the European Union;
- v) Continue to work with the Institute of Employment Rights, the Campaign for Trade Union Freedom and promote the Manifesto for Labour Law;
- vi) Continue to campaign greater levels of compliance with the minimum wage in the care sector, including a push for more transparent pay slips;
- vii) Campaign to ensure that care providers are not allowed to use the funding problems in the social care system as an excuse for continuing to exploit our members and the wider workforce through continued non-compliance with the minimum wage.

*National Executive Council*

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53.1

Insert new sixth paragraph after "...exploited their workforce for years.":

"Conference notes with concern that some care providers, who are commissioned by public authorities, are hostile to trade unions, and that this can present a barrier in our efforts to support care workers in pursuing even their legal minimum rights at work."

In point ii) after "...in-house teams and contacted staff." add the following:

"This should include pursuing commitments from public authorities to:

A) Better employment and service standards from the organisations they commission services from through, for example, adopting UNISON's ground-breaking Ethical Care Charter;

B) Explore and utilise their new freedoms resulting from the UK leaving the EU so as to favour local, ethical and/or public sector organisations in procurement decisions."

*Sefton*

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53.2

Add new point iii):

"iii) Work with the international committee on ways to promote ethical procurement practices across all of public services to ensure that no abuses take place in the global supply chains of public bodies and private companies delivering public services;"

Renumbered accordingly.

*United Utilities*

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#### **54. UNISON wide campaign to replace agency work with permanent jobs**

The explosion of agency work, in particular across public services throughout the UK is costing £billions, pushing many budgets to breaking point, exploiting workers and impacting on service delivery. This is especially pronounced in vital front line services in health, social services, ambulance services and education. In many cases it is also a casualisation strategy for wholesale privatisation of services.

UNISON has rightly played an important role in campaigning for rights for agency workers, raising awareness of those rights and developing organising strategies. However what we now need is a comprehensive union-wide strategy to eliminate the bulk of agency working and replace it with permanent, decent work.

There are now more than 20,000 employment agencies across the UK and this figure is constantly increasing at the expense of public money and decent work. The figures for spending on agency work in the NHS alone across Northern Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales amounts to £billions and is still on the rise.

Not all agency workers are exploited. Constant stories emerge of medical locums earning £400k for less than a year's work. At the other end of the scale many thousands of agency workers are delivering vital front line services on or below the minimum wage. It is time to call a halt.

Conference calls on the incoming National Executive Council to develop a high profile campaign and smart strategies to begin to reverse this utterly unacceptable attack on decent work. This is not solely a task for services groups and sectors but is a whole union challenge which must be met with co-ordination across all UNISON regions and the centre.

*Mater Hospital Trust  
Ulster Community and Hospitals Trust*

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54.1

Add new fifth paragraph:

"Whilst a very small number of agency workers can earn large wages compared to salaried staff, generally these are working in professional areas of the NHS such as medical and nursing posts or local authority social work where there difficulties recruiting and retaining staff. Conference therefore notes that factors such as high workload, difficult shift patterns, demanding workloads, lack of sufficient numbers of trained staff in that speciality and low salaries which do not reflect the expertise required can all drive workers into choosing agency work over salaried jobs."

*National Executive Council*

## Pensions

### 55. UNISON and the WASPI campaign

Conference is aware that in recent years governments have increased the state pension for all women born on or after 6 April 1951.

The Conservative government's Pension Act (1995) included the provision to raise the pension age of women from 60 to 65, in line with men's retirement age. The subsequent Pension Act (2011) implemented a much faster timetable for bringing in the changes.

Whilst the equalisation of State Pension Age was necessary to meet equality obligations, the impact of the equalisation and subsequent raise in the State Pension Age is greater on women, who are historically significantly lower paid and more likely to have to rely on their state pension alone.

Further, account has not been sufficiently taken of women's childcare and caring responsibilities; the greater likelihood of them working part-time; and the qualification period in respect of paid employment which creates another barrier for women who are unable to comply with this requirement and achieve the maximum state pension.

Retirement plans for these women have been shattered with devastating consequences. When this group of women started work they were generally paid much less than men and often excluded from workplace pension schemes. Their generation has benefitted little from the social and legal changes that have improved working women's lives and yet they are now being asked to shoulder much of the burden of equalisation with men. This change will affect over 2.5 million women suffering huge financial losses whilst not having been given enough notice to make alternative plans for their retirement.

Women who had anticipated an earlier retirement are now facing redundancy as public sector cuts bite. Further, many employers are reluctant to employ older workers, and many women of the "sandwich generation" are called on to care for elderly dependants and grandchildren.

The Women Against State Pension Inequality (WASPI) campaign was established to fight the injustice caused to women born on or after 6 April 1951, and for transitional arrangements to be put in place. They do not dispute the need for equalisation of the State Pension Age for men and women.

They have challenged the government who ignored the Turner Commission and SAGA recommendations that between 10 and 15 years notice should be given to women who would be affected by the changes; failed to notify many thousands of women of the changes; and accelerated the timetable without due notice.

UNISON has a long history of campaigning and negotiating for decent state and occupational pensions for our members. Now, more than ever, it is essential to continue that fight, and to ensure that women of all ages are aware of the implications of failing to invest in a future pension, and of what the future may hold in terms of their state pension.

Conference also believes that the women who have been so unjustly treated by this and previous governments deserve our support.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to work with the National Women's Committee, WASPI and other relevant bodies to use whatever means possible in the campaign to introduce a fairer transitional arrangement for the women affected.

This work to include:

- 1) Continuing our support for the WASPI national campaign;
- 2) Raising awareness of the issue and providing information for branches and affected members on how to lobby their MP and register their interest with the Department of Work and Pensions;
- 3) Lobbying MPs to support the campaign and fair transitional arrangements for the women affected;
- 4) Encouraging branches and regions to establish links with local WASPI groups and work with them on the campaign;
- 5) Continuing to defend and protect members' rights to fair pay and pensions, including recognition of the impact of low pay and caring responsibilities on many women's ability to achieve a decent pension;
- 6) Continuing to campaign for decent pension provision for future generations and a decent, universal, basic state pension for all citizens;
- 7) Campaigning against the ageism which presents additional barriers to older women in the workforce;
- 8) In the longer term, campaigning for equalisation in the State Pension Age to 60.

*National Women's Committee*

### 56. Retirement? What retirement?!

Conference notes that in 1995 the Conservative government included into the Pension Act (1995) provision to raise the pension age of women from 60 to 65 so that it would be in line with men's retirement age. The Conservative led Coalition government's Pension Act of 2011, implemented a much faster timetable for bringing in the changes and this has led to hundreds of thousands of women suffering a huge loss of up to £15,000 in lost State Pensions.

Campaigning group WASPI (Women Against State Pension Inequality) have undertaken extensive research in their campaigning efforts to get the current government to re-think the timetable

in order to make it a much fairer transition for women affected by the changes. The Conservative government of 1995 completely ignored the recommendations that between 10 to 15 years notice should be given to women who would be affected by the changes. The Conservative government then and now continue to show a blatant disregard for women by ignoring the advice from the Turner Commission and Saga in 1995 to give a notice period to women, sending letters to some of the women to be affected 14 years after the 1995 Pension Act was enacted, and speeding up the original timetable of implementation leaving hundreds of thousands of women out of pocket.

Many women claim that they were only notified about any changes when the coalition government announced the speeding up of the original timetable, whilst some still say they have never received a letter at all. The issue is not about the fact that women and men will retire at the same age; the issue is about the unfairness in which the changes to women's state pensions are being implemented. One example of this is that women of a similar age could have disproportionately longer to wait for their pension, for example a one year difference in a woman's date of birth can make an almost three year difference to their state pension age!

Conference recognises the campaigning and negotiating work that UNISON does on behalf of members on pensions. WASPI is a women's campaign that is generating huge support, from individual people, trade unions and also more recently from employers too. Derbyshire County Council recently added its support to the campaign. As UNISON is the largest public sector union, Conference believes that UNISON could show support by raising awareness of the issues for women and of the WASPI campaign by talking to our member and employers.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to work with relevant UNISON committees, Self-Organised Groups and departments, Labour Link, WASPI, the TUC and any other relevant external agencies to:

- 1) Support the WASPI campaign;
- 2) Develop information leaflets and a briefing sheet so that branch Women's officers and branches can raise awareness of the campaign and encourage support at a local level and in particular with employers.

*Epsom and Ewell  
Isle of Wight*

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## 57. A Living Pension

Conference notes that many older people are living well below the poverty level, which at present is £182 per week.

The UK State Pension is rated as one of the worst in Europe.

Pensions are not benefits but are in fact deferred wages from previous National Insurance payments and deductions from work and taxable income.

Older people and those with disabilities have been greatly affected by austerity. Increases in the cost of living, low interest rates and a loss of facilities through cuts, have hit them hard. Research from TUC has revealed that pensioners' families will suffer cuts of £6-38 billion under the government's welfare reform.

It is crucial that older people continue to receive their universal benefits. Means testing is neither effective or efficient. Elderly people do not want the indignity and humiliation of having to prove their entitlement to assistance, consequently each year benefits to the equivalent of £3 billion go unclaimed.

The government is spending less by increasing the state pension age. They claim we are all living much longer but, The International Longevity Institute UK found that in 2013 there were 30,000 fewer people in their nineties than previously projected and latest official figures show that life expectancy has now started to fall.

Now is the time to accept that there is an urgent need to substantially strengthen and reform a pension scheme that is over 100 years old and no longer fit for the purpose.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to campaign for:

- 1) A weekly state pension that allows every pensioner without any other income, to not only exist and pay for the essentials but, which gives them the ability to lead an active life;
- 2) A single tier pension, which is the basic amount for every pensioner linked to average male earnings;
- 3) Equally available to all age qualified citizens irrespective of gender, so that no one is obliged to claim pension credit.

*National Retired Members' Committee*

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57.1

Add new seventh paragraph:

"Conference notes the recent government review of the state pension by John Cridland and is determined to oppose any proposal that further raises the state pension age or reduces the value of the state pension."

Delete point 2) and replace with:

"2) A single tier pension for every pensioner increased in line with the triple lock that is the better of average earnings, prices or 2.5%, and to continue to seek changes to the index used for calculating prices to include housing costs;"

*National Executive Council*

## International

### 58. Protecting Workers In Supply Chains Through Ethical Public Procurement

Conference remembers the events of April 2013, when the Rana Plaza disaster in Bangladesh resulted in the deaths of more than 1,130 workers, most of whom were young women. Conference notes with dismay the fact that people had been forced to work in a building they knew to be so unsafe as to be on the verge of collapse. Threats to workers that they would be fired if they did not do their shift forced workers into the building that ended up taking the lives of so many and injuring more than 2,000. Conference commends the National Executive Council for implementing an emergency motion to support workers in the garment industry to campaign for their right to freedom of association. Conference further notes the creation of a fund to support the trade union office of the Bangladesh Revolutionary Garment Workers Federation (BRGWF), and encourages regions and branches to continue to support this initiative.

Conference is aware that Rana Plaza was not the first avoidable disaster to take place in the expanding manufacturing industry of the Asia-Pacific region that supplies products that include garments, electronics and food to UK high street retailers, and possibly the NHS, local government and private companies providing public services. Conference acknowledges that violations of workers' rights also include denying workers the right to join a trade union.

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

Decent work, a key objective of the Strategic Development Goals (SDGs), has been widely downgraded in favour of rapid development as workers are being denied their fundamental rights. The removal of legally-binding rights is becoming more widespread as governments introduce legislation to create more 'flexibility' in the labour market: a euphemism for rolling back hard-won trade union and workers' rights.

Conference is dismayed to hear that in Bangladesh,

despite the promised reforms by the government following the tragic events of Rana Plaza, decent work still eludes the millions of workers in the readymade garment industry. In December 2016, workers went on strike for a wage increase. They were met with police brutality and mass sackings by factory owners. Over 1,600 were sacked, union offices were attacked and 600 workers were charged by the police including 11 trade union leaders who were arrested. One of those arrested was the president of one of UNISON's partners in Bangladesh, BGIWF. This is despite the assurances of the prime minister that there are now 'harmonious industrial relations' in Bangladesh. Conference applauds the National Executive Council for responding to the crackdown by working with British MPs to raise the issue in the UK parliament on our own government's responsibilities to ensure there are no abuses in supply chains producing goods destined for the UK.

Conference recognises that there are international treaties and codes in place that must be respected if workers are not to be abused in supply chains of goods destined for use in public services in the UK. These include the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, ILO core labour conventions, Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) Base Code and the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Conference notes that some public bodies have developed ethical procurement policies but believes that this needs to be expanded to include all public service providers.

Conference is aware that modern slavery, including forced and bonded labour, is becoming more widespread both in the UK and overseas. It is estimated that as many as 20,000 people are enslaved in the UK. Conference is concerned that the Modern Slavery Act has loopholes that exempt British companies from obligations under the Act if the goods or services they procure are not destined for the UK market. Conference believes this loophole must be closed. Conference further believes that the Modern Slavery Act reporting requirement under section 54 should be extended to include all public bodies.

Conference believes that UNISON members in all service groups including the NHS, local government, education as well as private companies providing public services have a role to play in ensuring their employers source ethically to ensure there is no exploitation in their supply chains.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Ask the International committee to work with service groups to promote UNISON's ethical procurement policy;
- 2) Encourage members to engage with their employers on ethical procurement strategies to ensure that products including clothing, footwear, electronics, food and other goods are ethically sourced;
- 3) Support the extension of section 54 of the Modern

- Slavery Act to include public bodies;
- 4) Support campaigns to amend the Modern Slavery Act so that UK companies are held responsible for abuses in their supply chains where goods or services are not destined for the UK e.g. the construction industry in Qatar;
  - 5) Work with trade unions and non-governmental organisations such as Labour Behind the Label and People and Planet, to support workers making goods destined for the UK market, in their campaigns for fundamental rights at work;
  - 6) Encourage branches and regions to affiliate to Anti-Slavery International and Labour Behind the Label;
  - 7) Encourage branches and regions to get involved in the TUC's Playfair Qatar campaign.

*National Executive Council*

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## 59. Child marriage is child labour

Conference notes that in September 2016 the International Labour Organisation (ILO) launched the Alliance 8.7, an initiative which will bring together all interested parties to join forces in achieving UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development target 8.7, aiming at a world without forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labour.

Conference welcomes the initiative, which it is anticipated will also address other sustainable development goals, including gender equality.

However, Conference is concerned to note that while child labour is included in the target, the ILO does not include forced marriage within its definition of child labour. Conference believes that urgent action is needed to address the issue of child marriage as a form of child labour, a crisis documented in the AIDS Free World report, *Child Marriage is Child Labour*.

New data from Save the Children reveals an alarming crisis in Afghanistan, as 3,000 Afghans are repatriated daily from Pakistan, following a tightening in regulations by Pakistani authorities. More than 70 percent of returnee parents and community leaders, who took part in a survey compiled by the aid organisation, said early marriage and child labour were major risks faced by repatriated children currently not in school.

With lack of documentation, money and access identified as major barriers for schoolchildren, parents who are facing poverty often feel the only stable choice they can make is to arrange a marriage for their daughter, or enter them into the workforce early.

These girls will join the estimated 15 million girls who, over the next year, will be forced into "marriages." Instead of receiving an education alongside their peers, child "wives," are forced to work long hours cooking and cleaning. They work night shifts caring for babies and younger children. Under the control of older "husbands"

they are physically and psychologically abused and raped repeatedly. They work in conditions that threaten their lives and their health, suffer human rights and labour violations on a daily basis, and many die as a result.

If these activities were performed in a third-party household, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) would count them as work, and they would be included in child labour statistics, and in international action to end child labour. But because the children are married – albeit illegally – the ILO regards their workplace as their valid household and excludes them.

Conference believes that "child marriage" is not merely a harmful traditional practice: it is a crime; it is child labour in its worst form, and a complete violation of a girl's human rights.

Conference further believes that "child marriage" should be included amongst the worst forms of child labour as defined by the ILO core convention 182, Worst forms of child labour.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to work to work with the National Women's Committee, the international committee, the TUC, AIDS Free World and other appropriate bodies to urge the ILO to take a principled stance, to treat child marriage as one of the worst forms of child labour under ILO core convention 182 and to take action to force governments to provide the resources for proper monitoring and implementation of the convention.

*National Women's Committee*

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## 60. Child Marriage is Child Labour

Conference notes that every year an estimated 15 million girls are forced into child marriages. They endure sexual, physical and psychological abuse, human rights and labour violations on a daily basis. Child marriage destroys the health of girls, robs them of sexual and reproductive choices, puts them at lifelong high risk of sexually transmitted infections, and exponentially increases their chances of dying in childbirth.

Conference notes that child marriage meets all the criteria for the worst forms of child labour as defined by Article 3 of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) core convention 182, but the ILO maintains that child marriage does not count as work, as it is performed in the child's own household. It is therefore excluded from child labour statistics. This definition is highly flawed as it assumes that a child has consented to the marriage and ignores the illegal nature of their living arrangements.

Conference believes that child marriage is a crime and should be considered as a worst form of child labour by the ILO. This would force governments to include child marriage in their child labour statistics and take stronger action to protect girls' rights. It would engage governments, unions and business to work against and enable the ILO to use its resources to tackle the issue.

- Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:
- 1) Work with AIDS Free World, Anti-Slavery International and other groups calling on the ILO to include child marriage as a worst form of child labour;
  - 2) Request that the Trades Union Congress and Public Services International raise the issue with the ILO.

*Wolverhampton*

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## 61. Working globally for LGBT rights

Conference celebrates our union's rich history of international work and recognises that the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) group has incorporated this into its own work. UNISON continues to raise LGBT issues in the different international forums in which we work and raise trade unionism in all LGBT forums in which we engage.

Conference notes that the 53 Commonwealth states comprise a quarter of United Nations member states and a third of humanity. The Commonwealth defines itself as a free and equal association of nations committed to the core principles of democracy, human rights, equality, non-discrimination, opportunity for all, liberty of the individual and human dignity. Yet 40 Commonwealth member states retain laws criminalising same-sex relations, which are largely a legacy of British colonialism. Trans people also face widespread violence and abuse, though this is less well documented.

Conference recognises, however, that there are signs of progress being made on the rights of LGBT people around the Commonwealth, and welcomes:

- 1) The establishment of the Commonwealth Equality Network, the first civil society group to advocate on behalf of LGBT people within the Commonwealth institutions and Commonwealth Civil Society, with 35 member organisations from 30 Commonwealth countries;
- 2) The higher profile of LGBT human rights at the last Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting (CHOGM) in 2015, with two sessions on LGBT issues included in the People's Forum - the civil society meeting that runs alongside the formal CHOGM.
- 3) Conference notes that the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Baroness Patricia Scotland, has committed to promoting dialogue on LGBT issues during her tenure. The next CHOGM is in the United Kingdom (UK) in 2018.
- 4) Conference further notes the inquiry by the All Parliamentary Party Group (APPG) on Global LGBT Rights 2016 into "The UK's stance on international breaches of LGBT rights" found "a pressing need" for the development and implementation of a coherent, co-ordinated cross-departmental government strategy for

promoting equality for LGBT people around the world, and that departmental commitments to support the rights of LGBT people need to receive meaningful investment and political support to ensure effective implementation.

- 5) Conference welcomes the recommendations in the inquiry report for the development of a governmental cross-departmental strategy and the establishment of a stakeholder steering group to help guide its development and implementation.
- 6) Conference also welcomes the recognition in the report that "we need to ensure that the stances taken in the UK, whether by the government, politicians, civil society or businesses are effective, and also that interventions are not counter-productive" and that "it is vital for stakeholders in parliament, government, the private sector and civil society to take their lead from local LGBT communities".
- 7) Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to work with the National LGBT Committee to:
  - a) Work with other appropriate organisations to seek the inclusion of LGBT rights issues as a substantive item on the agenda of the 2018 CHOGM;
  - b) Seek discussions with the APPG about the role of trade unions and the work of UNISON to promote LGBT equality internationally, and representation in the stakeholder group;
  - c) Press for implementation of the APPG's recommendations on development of a cross-departmental government strategy and allocation of the resources needed to ensure effective implementation.

*National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee*

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## 62. International Trade EU Exit and Trump

Conference notes the publication of the Governments Building our Industrial Strategy Green Paper in January 2017; believes that following a decade of underperformance and seven years of Conservative Government it is about time the Tories got round to making sure that every part of the UK benefits from good quality jobs, modern infrastructure and the economic growth which supports improvements in living standards.

Conference is concerned, however, that the lack of clarity around the Government's plans for the UK's exit from the European Union, the election of President Trump in the United States of America – who has at times championed protectionism – and the continued policy of austerity in the UK could undermine the Government's welcome u-turn towards an interventionist economic policy. Conference is also concerned that the Green Paper fails to mention partnership working with trade unions and runs contrary to the Prime Ministers threat to change the

UK into an offshore tax haven should the EU fail to grant the UK a good deal regarding access to the single market.

Recent campaigns by UNISON and the ETUC on trade agreements such as Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) have highlighted to members how recently negotiated international trade agreements are now mostly about “regulatory barriers” to trade - not tariffs. TTIP negotiations have currently stalled and the Trump administration’s decision to walk away from the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) and renegotiate the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA) mean that TTIP is very unlikely to be agreed, if at all, by the time the UK has left the European Union. However, Conference is extremely worried about reports that the UK Government may seek a fast-track trade deal with the US. Private healthcare companies in the US have an ‘offensive interest’ in opening up the NHS to further privatisation and multinational pharmaceutical companies want to undermine NHS pricing controls. UNISON also knows that such a move would only lower standards in the UK by abolishing the regulatory controls that exist to protect workers and consumers. UNISON members also know that pay, pensions and other terms and conditions may also be affected in the “race to the bottom”, whilst the further privatisation of services through such deals, which history has shown to penalise women workers in particular, may also adversely impact on existing standards.

Conference is also alarmed that international trade deals increasingly include investment protection chapters and investor state dispute settlements. Conference believes that such mechanisms are a direct threat to democratic decision making restricting governments from legislating in the public interest, how they run public services and regulate utilities. These provisions give foreign companies a right to apply to private arbitration tribunals for compensation whenever a government passes a law which they deem to be a form of indirect expropriation of their assets, bypassing national courts and undermining democracy. The tribunal process only benefits those companies that use it and the high paid corporate lawyers that service it whilst, at the same time, threatening the willingness of governments to pass public health, environmental protection or human rights legislation.

UNISON believes that all trade deals and any new Trade Bill regarding future international trade deals must be carefully negotiated, have broad public consultation and be democratically voted on in the UK Parliament and by the devolved nations parliaments and assemblies.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign to ensure there is both full Parliamentary and full public consultation on all future trade deals;
- 2) Work with other trade unions and external campaigning groups, including those based

in other countries, to ensure that future trade agreements between the UK and other countries must include enforceable labour provisions based on the ILO core conventions, the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and the ILO Decent Work Agenda;

- 3) Work with Parliamentarians to ensure that future trade deals explicitly exclude public services, including exclusion from investment chapters and their private tribunals, not just market access and national treatment;
- 4) Continue to play a leading role, both in the UK and internationally, in shaping an alternative trade agenda that respects international labour standards and quality public services, protection of the environment and the right of countries in the Global South and elsewhere to set their own priorities for economic development;
- 5) Lobby MPs, MEPs and Ministers to highlight the threats posed by new trade deals and to oppose their implementation when they undermine workers rights.

*National Executive Council*

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62.1

Add at end of penultimate paragraph (ending.. “devolved nations parliaments and assemblies.”):

“Conference believes that Theresa May’s haste in offering a State Visit to Donald Trump is part of an agenda to promote Trade Deals which will not protect workers’ rights or public services.”

Add new point 6):

“6) Support the demand that the offer of a State Visit to Donald Trump is withdrawn. Should Trump’s State Visit go ahead support appropriate protests and demonstrations and seek to ensure that the demands on global fair trade set out in this motion form part of the agenda of those protests.”

*Tower Hamlets*

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### **63. CETA and International Trade**

Conference notes that despite significant coordinated opposition from trade unionists and social justice campaigners, the toxic EU-Canada trade deal, CETA, was voted through by the European Parliament in February.

Conference believes that CETA, along with the UK government’s international trade agenda, is primarily designed to cut tariffs and “regulatory barriers to trade”, making it easier for corporations in both Europe and Canada (and the US) to access each other’s markets. Conference is concerned that this big business agenda poses a serious threat to jobs, democracy, worker’s rights,

public services such as the NHS, and the environment.

A recent research report by UN economic researcher Pierre Kohler and Delft University economist Servaas Storm warns that CETA will reduce employment throughout the trade area, depressing wages in the EU and Canada. The report predicts that CETA will eliminate 227,000 jobs by 2023, with 204,000 job losses across the EU and a further 23,000 jobs lost in Canada. The European Parliament's own Employment and Social Affairs Committee found that CETA will widen 'the income gap between unskilled and skilled workers thus increasing inequalities and social tensions'.

Conference is concerned that CETA, along with other international trade deals, contains an investment protection chapter and separate corporate court system that gives corporations powers to sue the UK government. Such a system provides big business with access to a court that is not available to anyone else such as trade unions or citizens and restricts a government's ability to legislate in the public interest.

Conference believes that the passage of CETA leaves us with serious concerns about any future trade deals the government negotiates after the UK leaves the European Union. The Tories see CETA as a blueprint for an EU-UK deal and Canada has indicated that it will also be the model for a UK-Canada deal.

Conference believes that any future trade deals must put workers rights, public services and the environment before profit and be democratically voted on in the UK parliament.

Conference commends the campaigning work of UNISON activists across the UK who have drawn attention to the very real dangers posed by CETA. Conference believes that through such activity, and working in partnership with other trade unions and organisations such as War on Want and Global Justice Now, UNISON can play a key role in shaping a more progressive international trade policy that protects workers and citizens.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign to ensure full parliamentary scrutiny and meaningful public consultation of any future trade agreements before the UK signs them;
- 2) Lobby MPs and MEPs to oppose any trade deals that undermine workers rights and lack democratic accountability;
- 3) Campaign for an alternative and progressive international trade policy that protects workers rights, public services and the environment;
- 4) Encourage regions and branches to support and affiliate to the campaigning organisations War on Want and Global Justice Now.

*Halton*

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## 64. Workers' Rights In Turkey

Conference is concerned at the rapid deterioration of democracy, human rights and the rule of law in Turkey, particularly since the failed coup attempt on 15 July 2016. The disproportionate government response to the coup is clearly intended to silence its critics and goes far wider than the alleged perpetrators.

At least 100,000 public sector employees have been dismissed or suspended arbitrarily, in most cases without evidence of wrong doing. Workers who have been sacked are banned from future employment in the public sector. An estimated 15,000 members of public sector trade union centre KESK unions have been left without jobs, particularly in education and health. Many media outlets critical of the government have been closed down and the journalists who work for them arrested.

The denial of workers' rights did not start with the coup. For many years trade unionists have been subjected to repressive laws, a flawed legal system, police brutality and a continued erosion of their rights. May Day celebrations have been banned and security forces have brutally crushed trade union protests, arresting trade union leaders, commonly under anti-terror laws or for insulting the president. The ITUC gives Turkey a rating of 5, i.e. no guarantee of rights, in its annual global rights index, placing it amongst the worst countries to be a trade unionist in the world.

Trade unionists in the south east of Turkey have come under particular attack, particularly following the elections in June 2015 and the breakdown of peace talks between the government and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in July 2015. Thousands of Kurdish teachers have been arbitrarily dismissed for alleged links with the PKK, trade union offices have been raided and activists have been arrested for conducting legitimate trade union business. Escalating violence, curfews and the mass deployment of security forces restricted freedom of movement and authorities prevented residents from leaving their homes to access medical services, food and water. Democratically elected representatives of Kurdish areas have been detained, including MPs representing the People's Democracy Party (HDP) and local mayors replaced by government appointees.

Conference notes that Turkey is currently hosting three million refugees and asylum seekers, most of whom are escaping the atrocities in Syria. This has placed an immense strain on public services and the government has failed to provide adequate protection and support to refugees and asylum seekers in poverty, facing exploitation. The European Union (EU) has prevented refugees and asylum seekers entering its territory through deals with countries on its borders, erecting fences and denying its responsibility to millions of vulnerable people fleeing conflict, violence and persecution.

Conference believes that UK government has

failed to respond to the erosion of democracy and human rights in Turkey, instead prioritising future trade deals and preventing refugees entering Europe.

Conference denounces Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson's call on the EU to stop pushing Turkey "into a corner" over the death penalty. EU human rights laws must be fully implemented by Turkey ahead of any accession process.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Support workers' rights in Turkey through EPSU and PSI solidarity initiatives with affiliate unions;
- 2) Urge the UK government to prioritise human rights and democracy in its negotiations with Turkey, including calling on the authorities to:
  - a) Uphold workers' rights, end the arbitrary dismissal of public sector workers and ensure those who have been suspended or dismissed are given the right to a fair hearing;
  - b) Lift the closure of media outlets and release all journalists detained for exercising their right to freedom of expression;
  - c) Release all political prisoners and resume the peace process, in which trade unions and civil society can fully participate.
  - d) Urge the UK government along with other EU member states to support the resettlement of refugees from Turkey and end the return of refugees and asylum seekers to Turkey on the flawed basis it is a safe third country.

*National Executive Council*

attacks on Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) targets in Iraq and Kurdish forces in Syria, who have been fighting and defeating ISIS, and illustrates that the suppression of Kurdish identity, culture and democratic aspirations is central to the Turkish government's domestic and regional policy.

In light of the above, Conference condemns the UK government's continuing sale of arms to Turkey.

Conference condemns the attempted coup in Turkey but notes that the Turkish government has used this as an excuse to restrict freedom of speech, association, democratic and human rights.

Conference welcomes the growing support for solidarity with the Kurdish people and for steps to be taken to restart a peace process. We welcome the setting up of the trade union initiated "Freedom for Ocalan" Campaign and call on the National Executive Council to affiliate to the Campaign.

Finally, Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Support calls for the suspension of arms sales to Turkey until full democratic rights are restored and a peace process is underway;
- b) Strengthen links with progressive trade unions in Turkey and arrange reciprocal exchanges to build solidarity actions;
- c) Call for the release of all political prisoners including the co-leaders of the HDP, the Kurdish women's movement and Abdullah Ocalan;
- d) Support efforts to pressure the Turkish government to reinstate peace negotiations with Kurdish leaders and organisations.

*South Lanarkshire*

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## 65. Turkey

Conference notes with concern the attacks on the Kurdish community in Turkey, where the government of President Erdogan has over the past two years:

- 1) Ended peace negotiations with Kurdish leader Abdullah Ocalan;
- 2) Increased repression against Kurdish activists and communities leading to the jailing of many activists and the death of hundreds of civilians;
- 3) Removed the immunity of Members of Parliament and charged MPs from the Peace and Democracy Party (HDP) with terrorist offences, jailing a number of them including the co-leaders Demirtas and Yuksekdag;
- 4) Removed from office several elected mayors and replaced them with state appointed officials;
- 5) Sacked thousands of public servants;
- 6) Closed down many media outlets and jailed journalists;
- 7) Closed down NGOs including charities supporting refugees, abused women and children and the Kurdish women's organisation, the Free Women's Assembly (KJA).

Conference notes that this coincides with Turkey's

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### 65.1

Insert in first paragraph, after "concern": "the erosion of democracy and human rights throughout Turkey, including" delete "in Turkey" after "Kurdish community".

Delete "Kurdish" from point 1) and replace with "Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK)".

Insert at end of point 5) after "servants":

"and harassed and arrested trade unionists"

Delete second paragraph after: "Conference notes that this coincides with" and replace with: "the deployment of security forces, imposition of curfews and restrictions on freedom of movement in the south east of Turkey, and military attacks on Democratic Union Party (PYD), People's Protection Units (YPG) and Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) targets in Syria and Iraq, who have been fighting and defeating so called Islamic State (ISIS). Conference condemns the Turkish government's oppression of the Kurdish population and the continued erosion of human rights, democracy and fundamental freedoms."

Delete point c) after "Call for the release of all

political prisoners” and replace with: “including trade unionists, academics, journalists, the co-leaders of the HDP and the Kurdish women’s movement, and call for the release of Abdullah Ocalan as part of a negotiated peace process with the PKK.”

Add final point: “e) Support calls for the end of arbitrary dismissals of public service workers and the right to a fair hearing for all those who have been suspended or dismissed.”

*National Executive Council*

65.2

Delete second sentence of the fifth paragraph, following “steps to be taken to restart a peace process.” and replace with:

“We note the setting up of the trade union initiated “Freedom for Ocalan” Campaign and call on the National Executive Council to meet with the campaign.”

*National Executive Council*

## **66. Saudi Arabia - Ending the Links**

Conference notes that in March 2015, a Saudi led coalition intervened in Yemen’s civil war in support of the country’s recently deposed president. The move was backed by a deeply slanted UN security council resolution, in which the Saudi’s and other regional monarchies took a leading role in drafting, and which was then rubber-stamped by their western allies.

At least 10,000 people have been killed, including about 4,000 civilians, mostly by coalition airstrikes.

A UN report documented more than 100 strikes on civilian’s targets in the first nine months of the intervention, describing a pattern of such attacks that was “widespread and systematic”. The world’s leading human rights organisations and humanitarian non-governmental organisation’s all agree with that assessment.

Whitehall has approved £3.3 billion of arms exports (including bombs and missiles) to Saudi Arabia since the intervention began, a huge rise on the equivalent preceding period.

According to the UN World Food Programme, 14 million Yemenis are going hungry, half of them now tipping into outright starvation, an outcome long predicted by aid agencies.

Conference recognises that all sides in the conflict have been guilty of siege tactics and indiscriminate attacks on civilians, but the coalition is responsible for the vast majority of the suffering, and the coalition is the side that Britain is actively supporting.

Last year the Parliamentary Labour Party moved a motion “That this House supports efforts to bring about a cessation of hostilities and provide humanitarian relief

in Yemen, and notes that the country is now on the brink of famine; condemns the reported bombings of civilian areas that have exacerbated the crisis, believes that a full independent UN-led investigation must be established into alleged violations of international humanitarian law in the conflict in Yemen”.

Conference believes such a motion is in line with UNISON policy.

Conference is disappointed therefore that almost 100 Labour MP’s failed to support this motion despite there being a whip imposed.

Conference refutes the suggestion by John Woodcock MP that “the support we are giving is largely to help train pilots in targeting practices that reduce civilian casualties, trying to influence the Saudis into unambiguous compliance with humanitarian law”.

Conference therefore condemns the abstentions as a direct betrayal of Yemeni civilians caught up in the ongoing assaults.

Conference is also concerned that in moving the motion Emily Thornberry describe the Labour Party position as “Saudi Arabia will remain a valued strategic, security and economic ally in years to come”.

Conference therefore agrees:

- 1) That a country with the appalling human rights record of Saudi Arabia should not be considered a ‘valued ally’;
- 2) To call for an end to all military links with Saudi Arabia;
- 3) To work through Labour Link to call on the Labour Party and the Parliamentary Labour Party to adopt a similar position.

*Wolverhampton*

66.1

Delete from first paragraph: “The move was backed by a deeply slanted UN security resolution, in which the Saudi’s and other regional monarchies took a leading role in drafting, and which was rubber-stamped by their western allies.”

At end of second paragraph, after “coalition airstrikes.” add:

“A further 42,000 have been injured and over 3 million people displaced.”

Delete seventh paragraph after “the country is now on the brink of famine;” and replace with: “condemns the reported bombings of civilian areas that have exacerbated this crisis; believes that a full independent UN-led investigation must be established into alleged violations of international humanitarian law in the conflict in Yemen; and calls on the Government to suspend its support for the Saudi Arabia-led coalition forces in Yemen until it has been determined whether they have been responsible for any such violations.”

Add to the end of the ninth paragraph, after “whip imposed”:

“and condemns those MPs who voted against the motion”

Delete tenth, eleventh and twelfth paragraphs starting “Conference refutes the suggestion” and replace with: “Conference is concerned that the Conservative government has disregarded violations of human rights and the humanitarian crisis in Yemen in its trade negotiations with Saudi Arabia, and calls for human rights to be prioritised in all UK trade deals.”

*National Executive Council*

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## 67. Palestine: 50 Years of Occupation

Conference notes that 2017 commemorates the 50th anniversary of the occupation of East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza, the 10th anniversary of the siege of Gaza and the centenary of the Balfour Declaration. These events continue to have a devastating impact on the lives of 1.9 million people living under siege in Gaza, 2.7 million people in the illegally occupied West Bank and millions of refugees forced from their homes by the conflict.

In the last 50 years the illegal occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem has intensified. About 250 illegal settlements and outposts have been built housing at least 547,000 settlers on over 60 per cent of Palestinian land. Building has increased dramatically in recent years alongside the rapid demolition of Palestinian homes. In 2016 alone the Israeli government destroyed at least 1,089 Palestinian-owned structures in the West Bank.

For the last decade the Israeli government have blockaded access to Gaza by land, sea and air, creating a virtual prison in which fundamental human rights are denied. Almost half of households now suffer from food insecurity and only five per cent of water is drinkable. 42 per cent of the population are unemployed and many homes, schools and health facilities are yet to be rebuilt after the 2014 bombing campaign. Israel, as an occupying force, must lift the blockade immediately and comply with international law.

Conference welcomes United Nations resolution 2334 approved in December 2016 reiterating 10 previous resolutions, and reaffirming that Israel’s settlements have no legal validity and constitute a flagrant violation of international law. However, the Israeli government’s hostility to the resolution simply confirms its longstanding opposition to a viable two state solution.

The resolution commits the United Nations to examine practical ways and means to secure the full implementation of its relevant resolutions. Conference reaffirms its support for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS), including a UN arms embargo on Israel and a ban on settlement goods as practical ways of persuading Israel to implement the relevant UN resolutions

and end the occupation and the repression of the Palestinian people.

Conference welcomes the UK’s support for the resolution but is concerned by Prime Minister Theresa May’s damaging comments downplaying the impact of settlements. The Conservative government’s desire to develop a close relationship with the Trump White House should not be at the expense of Palestinian people’s rights.

Conference welcomes the establishment of the European Trade Union Initiative for Justice for Palestine and supports its efforts to bring together European and Palestinian unions to collaborate on campaigns to end the European Union and member states’ complicity with Israeli violations of international law.

Conference believes that the Israeli government has deliberately attempted to close the door on any prospects of a two state solution, by colonising much of the land earmarked for a viable, independent Palestinian State. Conference reaffirms its support for the right of the Palestinian people to determine their own future through democratic means, and call on the international community to help facilitate a fair, political solution to the conflict based on the principles of democracy, human rights and international law.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Support the Palestine Solidarity Campaign, Make It Right and other initiatives using the anniversaries of the occupation, blockade and Balfour to campaign for Palestinian rights;
- 2) Continue to campaign for the British government to recognise the Palestinian state and genuinely support the implementation United Nations resolution 2334 and other resolutions calling for an end to the Israeli occupation and supporting the right of the Palestinian people to self determination;
- 3) Support the European Trade Union Initiative for Justice for Palestine;
- 4) Encourage branches to support and affiliate to the Palestine Solidarity Campaign.

*Halton*

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### 67.1

In the eighth paragraph following “Palestinian State.” add:

Conference also notes Israel’s attacks and those of its allies on the worldwide solidarity movement with Palestine including measures which seek to outlaw support for the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign.

In the final paragraph, add the following additional sub-paragraphs:

“5) To seek appropriate ways to defend the right to campaign for peace with justice for the Palestinian people, in particular, to challenge regulations which seek to restrict

Local Government Pension Funds' investment decisions and public bodies' procurement policies; and,

6) To continue to seek appropriate ways to support the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign, both through its own purchasing etc. and that of branches and regions and also through the influence UNISON and its members can bring to bear on others' purchasing and investment decisions.

7) To give maximum support to a global day for Justice Now for the Palestinian People on Saturday 4th November 2017 arranged to coincide with the centenary of the Balfour Declaration."

*Wolverhampton*

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67.2

In point 1) after the word "initiatives" add the words: "including those that call for workers unity between workers of all faiths and nationalities in Israel/Palestine,"

*South Derbyshire Healthcare*

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## 68. Palestine time for a new debate

Conference calls upon UNISON through its international solidarity department to enhance its existing policy on Palestine namely by strengthening UNISON policy to include both Colonisation and occupation of Palestine into the policy wording.

Colonisation. "The action or process of settling among and establishing control over the indigenous people of an area." Source UN, President Jimmy Carter 2006.

The preeminent obstacle to peace is Israel's colonization of Palestine. There were just a few hundred settlers in the West Bank and Gaza when I became president, but the Likud government expanded settlement activity after I left office. President Ronald Reagan condemned this policy, and reaffirmed that Resolution 242 remained "the foundation stone of America's Middle East peace effort." President George H.W. Bush even threatened to reduce American aid to Israel.

Conference it goes without saying that within this motion we can give many examples of the ongoing and ever expanding colonisation of Palestine however as the motion states our objective as regards the motion is to strengthen our existing policy with regards Palestine.

It was clear to all concerned who visited Palestine as part of the UNISON delegation in April 2016 that the ever expanding illegal settlements with the full legislative backing of the Israeli parliament are a clear and unambiguous project of colonisation.

Conference Occupation is temporary, colonisation is permanent. We must act now and not wait until we read about the Palestinian indigenous people in the historical context. Including colonisation in our existing

policy provides a new platform for debate that allows our members to speak about the issue surrounding the situation in Palestine from the context of examples of colonialism and its historical lessons.

*Royal Hospital Trust*

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68.1

Delete first paragraph and replace with: "Conference calls on the National Executive Council to use the words colonisation and occupation when describing the illegal occupation of Palestine."

In the second paragraph insert "is defined by the United Nations as" after "Colonisation". Delete "Source UN, President Jimmy Carter 2006."

At the beginning of the third paragraph insert "In 2006 former US President Jimmy Carter said ""

Delete fourth paragraph.

*National Executive Council*

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## 69. New threats to Cuba from Trump administration

UNISON welcomes the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the US and Cuba in 2015. However, we note that the US blockade remains in place and Guantánamo Bay continues to be illegally US-occupied.

UNISON notes that the US Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control imposed 52 fines on US and overseas companies for carrying out financial transactions with Cuba due to blockade legislation, at a total of over \$14.4 billion, under the Obama administration alone.

UNISON notes that the risk of extra-territorial OFAC fines negatively impacts UK trade and relations with Cuba, including the closure of the Cuba Solidarity Campaign's (CSC) Co-operative Bank account in 2015.

Former U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called the blockade the "most unjust, severe and long-lived system" of sanctions ever applied against a country. It deprives Cuba of medicines, causes shortages and leads to high import costs on food and other essentials.

UNISON notes that despite all the hardships from the US blockade, which has caused over \$833 billion in damages, Cuba continues to be an inspiration with its excellent public services and internationalism. The Cuban government spends over half of its annual budget on health, education and social care and there are currently over 65,000 Cuban workers delivering health and education to 89 countries.

UNISON notes that the Trump administration poses new threats to Cuba. President Trump and Vice-President Pence both threatened to reverse the limited progress that took place under Obama during their election campaign and Trump has appointed some key pro-blockade lobbyists into key roles in his new administration.

International solidarity with the Cuban people is crucial in light of this threat and the campaign to end the blockade is now more important than ever.

Conference therefore commits to redouble our efforts to:

- 1) Call on the US government to completely end the blockade of Cuba and cease its occupation of Guantánamo Bay;
- 2) Call on the UK Government to oppose all US extraterritorial threats against UK-based companies, using existing UK antidote legislation to counteract the effects of the US extraterritorial blockade laws;
- 3) Urge all UNISON branches to affiliate to the Cuba Solidarity Campaign and/or the Scottish Cuba Solidarity Campaign and encourage members to join as individuals.

*South Lanarkshire*

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## 70. Don't let Cuba be Trumped

Conference should be concerned at the future of Cuba – US relations following the election of Donald Trump as US President and his administration appointments.

While the change in US policies towards Cuba under Barack Obama, including the re-establishment of diplomatic relations and the signing of a range of bilateral deals were welcome moves; the US trade blockade which has existed for 55 years remained in place and Guantánamo Bay continues to be US occupied.

The election of Donald Trump with Republican Party majorities in both chambers of Congress threatens to undo the limited progress in Cuba-US relations.

In October, during a speech in Florida, where anti-Castro sentiment is high, Trump called Obama's deals with Cuba "one-sided" and only beneficial to Havana. He went on to say "But all of the concessions that Barack Obama has granted the Castro regime were done with executive order, which means the next president can reverse them. And that is what I will do unless the Castro regime meets our demands".

It remains unclear as to how specifically the Trump administration will act on Cuba, but UNISON's campaigning work and international solidarity must continue unabated, and given the very real threat to Cuba posed by the messages coming out of the Trump administration, be re-energised.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Ensure we publicise the threats to Cuba to UNISON members via the union's publications and press statements;
- 2) Work collectively through the TUC with sister unions who share our views on Cuba;
- 3) Encourage regions and branches to visit Cuba in solidarity with the Cuban people and Cuban

trade unions;

- 4) Give support to and campaign with the Cuba Solidarity Campaign;
- 5) Encourage branches and regions to affiliate to the Cuba Solidarity Campaign.

*Newcastle City*

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## 71. Solidarity with Venezuela

Conference notes the gains made by Venezuela's progressive government over the last 17 years. Such gains include record investment in public services, creating a free education system and implementing a free national health service. 20 million people have benefited from various anti-poverty missions which have reduced extreme poverty from 20% to 4.8%. Since 2010, the construction of 1.2 million homes has enabled the provision of social and low cost housing for Venezuela's poorest citizens.

Conference reaffirms its position adopted in 2006 of supporting the progress the Venezuelan government has achieved through using the country's resources for the benefit of the majority of its people.

Conference further notes Venezuela's commitment to trade union rights through a progressive labour law. The law has enshrined the right to form unions, trade union freedom, the right to strike and to take secondary and solidarity action; recognised the right to collective bargaining, and an obligation for employers to negotiate with trade unions; ended outsourcing and the use of agency labour to undermine terms and conditions; implemented the right to social security, including pensions, for all workers for the first time; extended maternity and paternity leave; prohibited all forms of discrimination and brought into place an obligation for employers to promote and support employment for disabled workers; established minimum wages and premium payments for shift work by law; defined mass dismissals by law and granted the Labour Ministry power to suspend such dismissals through a set resolution; and granted the right to training and education for all workers.

Conference believes that Venezuela currently faces a range of political and economic difficulties which seriously threaten social progress in the country. These difficulties have resulted from a global crash in oil prices that has damaged export revenue and the economy. The economic difficulties have been exacerbated by US sanctions placed over Venezuela after President Obama declared the country 'an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States'. The executive order was opposed by all 33 members of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean states (CELAC). The US has now admitted that Venezuela 'does not pose a threat', yet sanctions remain.

Conference further believes that elements of

Venezuela's right wing have refused to recognise the democratic election of President Maduro and have systematically attempted to bring about his removal through 'any means necessary' including undemocratic action. The threats facing Venezuela are critical for the country and for Latin America, and therefore require urgent solidarity from trade unionists.

Conference commends the work of the Venezuela Solidarity Campaign (VSC) in both highlighting social progress in Venezuela and challenging inaccurate reporting of the country in the UK and international media.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Encourage UNISON branches to affiliate to the VSC;
- 2) Invite Venezuelan speakers to UNISON conferences;
- 3) Send representatives on trade union delegations to Venezuela to build trade union links and to stand with progressive trade unions in the country;
- 4) Ensure information on the positive work of the Venezuelan government and the achievements it has made for the people of Venezuela is disseminated widely.

*North West*

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## **72. Jobstown not Guilty – Defend the right to protest**

In 2016 working people in the Republic of Ireland built a mass campaign of non-payment and direct action to defeat the imposition of a tax on water. This charge was a first step towards the privatisation of water. On 21 October 2016, a 17 year old was found guilty of false imprisonment in the Children's Court in the Republic of Ireland. He was 15 at the time of the 'false imprisonment', which consisted of participating in a protest against water charges and austerity on 15 November 2014, which resulted in Joan Burton's (the then Deputy Prime Minister) car being delayed for two and a half hours in Jobstown in Tallaght in the Republic of Ireland. There was no allegation or charge against him of any violence. He was recognised by the judge as having led a "blameless life".

However, the judge found him guilty of false imprisonment and listed the following factors which led him to that conclusion: He sat in front of a car and encouraged others to do so; He participated in a slow march; He momentarily stood in Joan Burton's way and asked to talk to her; He used a megaphone to chant "No way, we won't pay."

Conference believes that:

- 1) It is clear that he was protesting, not kidnapping. Although he was given a conditional discharge, meaning that he will not face imprisonment if of good behaviour for nine months, the important fact is that he was found guilty of false imprisonment because of participating in a protest. The verdict prepares the way for convictions and imprisonment

of 18 adult defendants next year, and a dramatic broadening of the definition of false imprisonment to include many forms of protest. Striking workers could find their picket lines classed as false imprisonment, as could any protesters who engage in a slow march or sit down protest;

- 2) In England, Wales and Northern Ireland a system of law similar to that in the Republic operates. There is a danger that a successful prosecution of the Jobstown defendants could lead to similar tactics being used against protesters here. The first trial of adults starts on April 24 with a group of seven defendants charged with false imprisonment. One of those is Paul Murphy, an MP for the Anti Austerity Alliance. If jailed for more than six months, he will be removed as an MP and the people of Dublin South West (which includes Jobstown) will be denied the democratic choice they made.

Conference resolves to:

- a) Condemn the conviction of the 17 year old protester of false imprisonment;
- b) Recognises that "an injury to one is an injury to all" and this conviction is a threat to everybody's democratic right to protest and to effective trade unionism;
- c) Calls for all charges to be dropped against all the Jobstown protesters immediately. Agree to send a message of solidarity and a donation to the #JobstownNotGuilty campaign and to publicise and support activities supporting the campaign.

*Mid Yorkshire Health*

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## **Europe**

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### **73. Exiting the EU – A Fair Deal For Workers and Public Services**

Conference notes that the triggering of Article 50 in early 2017 is a decision that affects working people, their families and communities in the UK, in the European Union and broader Europe. The Exiting the EU negotiations require that the government both seeks to leave the EU but also negotiates a new relationship and trade deal with the EU. This is an historic European negotiation that must answer both the challenges of today and tomorrow and fundamentally address devolved UK constitutional and legal issues that also arise.

Conference believes that these negotiations must be transparent, open to trade union consultation and involve parliamentary scrutiny and accountability. Workers need a fair deal from these negotiations with provisions for investment in quality jobs; protection of living standards

and employment rights; funding for quality public services, regional economies and infrastructure projects; an end to austerity pay levels; a fairer and more equal society and real future opportunities for young people.

Conferences further notes the governments' introduction of the Great Repeal Bill 2017. The Conservative government has proposed this will be an opportunity to scrutinise, amend, repeal or improve any aspect of EU law in the future. It is imperative that workers' rights, derived from European Union legislation, are safeguarded and maintained during both EU negotiations and in the future, after the exit date of the UK from the EU. No changes should be made to relevant workers rights legislation except through primary legislation open to full parliamentary scrutiny and trade union consultation.

Conference also believes that an EU deal will only be fair to workers if it does not progressively undermine workers' rights over time. Therefore any future trade deal between the UK and EU must include a commitment and a mechanism whereby the UK cannot fall behind the EU on improvements to employment rights. To ensure that UK workers rights continue to be no less favourable than EU Worker Rights in the future, UK courts and tribunals must have regard to positive developments in the EU's social and employment legislative framework.

Regaining control over the UK economy includes rethinking the use of state aid rules to fund public services and new national infrastructure projects. There is a new opportunity in public procurement to mandate the use of 'quality over price' in awarding private contracts to encourage corporate responsibility, encourage in-house provision, add social value in public services and prevent the race to the bottom.

Conference believes that whilst we have the opportunity to refinance and rebuild our NHS and care services the government has chosen not to. Instead between now and 2022 an estimated £70 billion in a budget 'tax give away' has been given to the very richest and to big business. This is not a fair deal for the public or public services.

Conference further believes that the government must place a fair deal for public services at the core of any new deal with the EU and wider global trade deals. Public services need to be fairly funded, protected and excluded from any new global trade deals and unfair private investment courts. Public services must also be removed from trade deals which encourage a global 'race to the bottom' through de-regulation, little enforcement protections of core ILO conventions and increased privatisation where private operators are allowed to put 'global' profits and protection of investments before public interest, local economies and decent pay for workers.

Conference believes that in the interests of UK workers, public services and the economy the government needs to pursue a new trade deal agreement with the EU

which provides the best economic opportunities for the UK to protect living standards and jobs.

Conference notes the free movement of goods, services, capital and workers remains a corner stone of the EU's Single Market. There can be no access to the Single Market if the right of EU – workers to seek employment in the UK and vice-versa is no longer guaranteed and is restricted by various controls. A core principle of EU free movement of labour should be that there is equal pay for equal work in the same work place regardless of nationality and it allows for the expansion of collective bargaining.

Conference however reiterates its opposition to all legislation from Europe which allows the exploitation of foreign workers or 'posted workers' and European Court of Justice decisions like Viking, Laval, Ruffert and Luxembourg which put competition and the profit of business before workers rights and which have also been used to attack trade union collective bargaining, the right to strike and workers' pay and conditions in public procurement.

Conference also believes instead that there must be better regulation of the UK jobs market to ensure every worker has a secure job with secure pay, where workers are treated with equal rights and given decent pay, terms and conditions. Collective bargaining agreements need to be in place in key sectors to stop undercutting, so that workers cannot be undercut by the unscrupulous use of agency workers, zero hour contracts and bogus self-employment.

Conference also agrees that Exiting of the EU must not allow racists and xenophobes to use borders to divide workers. The 'right to remain' for EU workers and freedom of movement must be defended against nationalists and corporate interests who use these issues to play workers against each other. Workers united in solidarity together are stronger in defending and promoting our interests across Europe.

Conference opposes all racists and xenophobe attacks. We stand in solidarity with those facing such hatred and violence in the work place and in our communities. The UK government should guarantee the right of EU citizens to remain in the UK and in particular recognise the valuable contribution that migrant workers make in vital public services such as health and social care. The right of UK workers to remain in the EU should also be part of the fair trade deal between the UK and the EU.

Conference believes in a fair deal with the European Union in which peace and cooperation, sustainable growth in all countries, and human and social rights must be preserved. At this moment where European cooperation and integration are threatened, conference is committed to continue to work together with our European sister trade unions, for quality public services, to fight social dumping and pursue a Social Europe.

Conference calls on the National Executive

Council to campaign for a fair deal for workers and public services and:

- 1) Continue to inform and engage UNISON members and the general public on how Exiting the EU negotiations may impact on the four key priority areas set out in the UNISON Exiting the EU campaign:
  - a) Employment, health and safety standards and trade union rights;
  - b) Public services and professional standards;
  - c) Trade deals/standards, environmental regulations and public procurement;
  - d) Freedom of movement and right to remain. Fighting racism, discrimination and promoting equalities and human rights;
- 2) Work with the TUC, ICTU (and their seven point plan), STUC, WTUC, Labour Party, MPs, MEPs, EPSU, ETUC and PSI and other alliances - who specifically campaign on public services, employment rights, human rights, equality rights, migration rights, environmental and consumer standards, health and safety and trade deals - to ensure the government adopts a transparent, informative, consultative and inclusive approach to all aspects of Exiting the EU negotiations and the Great Repeal Bill 2017 legislative process including addressing all devolved issues in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland;
- 3) To campaign with MPs and MEPs for an open, transparent and democratic process over the content and negotiations in the European Union as well as within the UK parliamentary process;
- 4) To campaign for an Impact Assessment of the final new EU deal with particular attention on how changes will impact on UK:
  - a) Economy and Regional growth;
  - b) Public services and procurement;
  - c) Employment rights;
  - d) Income equality and gender pay;
  - e) Jobs, Skills, Pay, terms and conditions;
  - f) Health and safety;
  - g) Equality, Citizen and Human rights;
  - h) Environmental standards and Consumer protections;
  - i) Land border and the movement of people and goods between UK and the Republic of Ireland.
- 5) To continue to campaign to keep public services outside the scope of existing and new EU trade agreements and oppose legislation which seek to liberalise and deregulate public services or downgrade existing ILO, social, consumer and environmental standards;
- 6) To oppose any new EU agreement or trade deals which undermine the democratic UK right to keep public services public or use special investor protection through ISDS (Investor state dispute settlement) or the ICS (Investor Court System) or 'lock in clauses' which would prevent the right to return public services to public ownership in the future without huge financial penalties for private profit compensation;
- 7) To campaign for a new trade deal with the EU that provides the best economic opportunities for the UK to protect living standards, public services and jobs, now and for future generations, based on full access to the Single Market or as close to that trade model which would benefit the UK economy the best;
- 8) To campaign for better use of state aid and procurement rules to fund quality public services and intervene in strategic industries, infrastructure and utilities under public procurement regulations and reject co-operation on domestic regulation that resembles the 'better regulation' approach that the EU has adopted and ECJ rulings which puts market competition and business interests before workers rights;
- 9) To campaign for the Right to Remain for EU workers and vice- versa for UK workers and citizens in other EU countries and continue to provide support and information to UNISON's estimated 70,000 EU members;
- 10) To continue to promote equality and challenge all forms of discrimination, including racism and hate crime, supporting migrant workers and the right for a humane immigration system, the EU free movement of labour and promoting UNISON's campaign to take action against undercutting of pay and conditions by closing down cheap labour loopholes which exploit low paid workers and thereby strengthening workplace protections;
- 11) To campaign for a UK legislative mechanism in the new EU deal that ensures that the UK's equalities and human rights, employment and labour laws, public procurement social provisions, consumer protection and environmental laws are not weakened or downgraded in the Exiting of the EU and that they continue to be favourably updated and interpreted so that UK workers have the same rights and protections as EU workers.

*National Executive Council*

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73.1

In second paragraph after "involve" delete all text until "Workers" and replace with "both parliamentary scrutiny and accountability and the scrutiny and consent of the devolved legislatures in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales."

In third paragraph after "consultation." insert "Conference opposes the plans outlined by the

Conservative Government to undermine human rights protections through not incorporating the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights into UK law.”

Insert new ninth paragraph:

“Conference recognises that in Northern Ireland, the vote of the public was to ‘remain’ and that the current position of the Conservative Government for a ‘hard’ exit from the EU places the Northern Ireland peace process in severe jeopardy. The particular circumstances of Northern Ireland must be recognised and respected within the negotiation process, with the best options for Northern Ireland, in terms of its future status and relationship with the EU being secured. This should include continued membership of the Single Market and of the Customs Union. The process of exiting the EU must not be allowed to undermine the constitutional settlement reached in Northern Ireland or the operation of the Good Friday Agreement. Current open border arrangements on the island of Ireland, which are so vital in terms of family life, study, work and trade and which have had a major positive impact for the peace process, must be preserved. The free movement of goods, persons and services across the island of Ireland must be secured. EU funding and support for the peace process, community projects, infrastructure and farming in Northern Ireland must be sustained.”

In 4) i) delete all text and replace with:

“The Northern Ireland peace process, the land border and the movement of people, goods and services between the UK and the Republic of Ireland.”

*Northern Ireland*

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73.2

In the first paragraph, insert new second sentence:

“Young people in particular will have to live longest with the consequence of exiting the EU, which is likely to bring enormous change to the employment and social landscape of the UK for generations to come.”

Add new fifteenth paragraph:

“Conference believes that the referendum conducted on 23 June 2016 was not conducted on a basis conducive to informed decision-making, and that if much of the information that has come to light since then had been available, it may well have resulted in a different outcome. Conference believes that, bearing in mind the importance of the issue, the people of the UK deserve the widest possible consultation on any new deal with the EU once it is agreed by Parliament and before it is adopted.”

Add new bullet point 12):

“12) To report back to National Delegate Conference 2018 on the latest information on any negotiations and proposed legislative changes, and to provide for debate on the best information available as to whether the terms of any deal with the EU approved by

Parliament should be the subject of consultation with the people of the UK.”

*National Young Members’ Forum*

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73.3

Add new sixth paragraph:

“There is also a recognition that the government’s national action plan for implementing the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights provides an opportunity to promote ethical public procurement across public services to ensure that slavery and workers’ rights violations are challenged and eradicated.”

Also add new 12) at end:

“12) To call on the UK government to put into effect its national action plan on implementing the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights across all of public services.”

*United Utilities*

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73.4

Insert new twelfth paragraph after “...and bogus self-employment.”:

“Conference notes that the arguments put forward during the referendum campaign about the importance of EU-level employment rights were not successful in convincing sufficient people for a remain vote. Conference believes that this reflects the reality of working life for too many people in the UK, which involves low wages and insecure employment. Conference believes that the need to defend existing, inadequate, employment protections was not a compelling argument for millions of working people.”

In point 7) after “future generations”, replace the comma with a full stop and delete the remainder of the sentence.

Insert new point 12):

“12) Campaign to build public support for workers’ rights in the UK, and promote an ambitious vision of how employment should be regulated through a more comprehensive system of collective bargaining.”

*Halton*

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73.5

In the fourteenth paragraph after the word “Social” add the words “and Socialist”

*South Derbyshire Healthcare*

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#### **74. The Great Repeal Bill – protecting devolution**

Conference notes that following the vote to leave

the EU in June 2016 the UK Government has consistently shown a disregard for the views of the devolved administrations in relation to the protections necessary when leaving the EU.

Conference notes the UK Government plans to introduce a 'Great Repeal Bill' designed to repeal the European Communities Act 1972 and incorporate existing EU law into UK law.

Following the passing of this Act decisions will be made, possibly by UK Government Ministers acting alone, about which elements of EU law to retain and which elements to discard. Given the current UK Government's attitude to equality and human rights in general, and worker's rights in particular, this has potential adverse implications for UNISON and its members across the UK.

Conference notes that this legislation will have major implications for the devolution settlements in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales as it may seek to implement a range of EU law relating to areas that are within the remit of the devolved legislatures and administrations. It may also allow UK Government Ministers to legislate to change existing EU laws without the consent of the devolved legislatures.

Conference believes that devolution has been to the benefit of our members, particularly within the fragile Northern Ireland peace process. Any interference by the UK Government in the devolution settlement, or attempts to 'claw-back' powers which have been devolved are unwelcome and will damage the delicate constitutional settlement across the UK.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to develop a campaign, including working with the Trade Union Council of the Isles, seeking that the devolution settlement is respected throughout the process of developing and implementing the Great Repeal Bill. This campaign should include seeking that:

- 1) The UK Government does not 'claw-back' powers which have already been devolved in order to weaken existing EU law protections;
- 2) Legislative consent for the provisions of Great Repeal Bill is sought from the devolved legislatures, including any removal of the requirements placed on the devolved legislatures to abide by EU law, any alteration of the competencies of the devolved legislatures and administrations, and any changes to EU law arising from the Great Repeal Bill;
- 3) The devolved administrations are given the autonomy to reach their own positions regarding the retention and development of EU laws, including the future status of EU law, such as decisions of the Court of Justice of the European Union, in relation to devolved matters;
- 4) Further devolution of powers is brought forward if required, including, but not limited to, any powers that are 'repatriated' from the EU.

*Northern Ireland*

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74.1

Insert in sixth paragraph after "National Executive Council":

"to work with the devolved regions"

Insert new bullet point 4):

"4) Campaign to ensure that all our governments uphold standards set by international human rights conventions."

Renumber bullet point 4) to bullet point 5)

*Scotland*

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74.2

Add new sixth paragraph:

"Conference further believes that access to the single market is good for the free movement of people and of high quality jobs. Conference recognises the moves already made by multinational companies to move jobs from the UK to sites within the EU since the referendum in June.

Conference condemns the unilateral decision by the UK Government to pursue "Hard Brexit" and believes that the constitutional future of the UK is further undermined by the actions that they have taken."

Add new bullet point 4):

"4) The devolved administrations are given the autonomy to reach their own positions regarding access to the EU single market."

Renumber accordingly.

*Lanarkshire Health*

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## **75. Immigration and the effects of the EU Referendum and the Brexit Vote**

The EU Referendum on 23 June 2016 and the decision of the United Kingdom (UK) to leave the European Union sent shock waves through communities with the immigration debate becoming ever more toxic. The campaign itself resulted in unacceptable language and propaganda being used about immigration generating fear, division and a 'them and us' rhetoric.

Since the result was announced there has been a dramatic increase in racial violence across the Country. The number of hate crimes recorded for the last two weeks in June 2016 spiked by 42 per cent on the previous year. The biggest number of recorded incidents came on 24 June – the day after the result – when there were 289 hate crime related incidents recorded.

With Scotland and Northern Ireland voting to remain and England and Wales voting to leave, the split has left Great Britain divided. The main political parties at this time are in disarray and there is a lack of political leadership. After years of austerity the electorate has shown a mood for change.

With the Conservative Party electing Theresa May as Prime Minister and the new evolved Brexit department, the sense of the unknown is still very much at the top of the political agenda. With the Labour Party's internal turmoil, it will be up to the trade unions to bring some stability and clear vision.

Within the Black community we have to reflect and recognise that many within our community used their democratic right to vote to leave the EU which appeared to help fuel this meltdown of the political elite and had a significant breakdown within many families and communities.

The Labour Party, once the party of the working class and the poor, founded in Bradford where once the sounds of the machinery of the cotton mills could be heard, the poorest and the youngest of our nation applying their trade and the migrants that were immigrants from the Asian, West Indian and African Continents continued the profitable industry of that time, did not get their message to remain across to many of those communities

Soon after the result was announced UNISON called for unity and committed to hold the Leave campaign to their promises, more money for the NHS, rights at work remaining intact and continuing to defend and protect workers and public services.

As discussions regarding the UK's future relationship with Europe get underway, Black workers face a period of instability at home and at work. Our union has a role to play not just in continuing the fight for equality but in providing stability, unity and support to Black, and all workers.

The EU has been active in a number of human rights protections including employment and Anti-Discrimination law. Many of these protections, particularly those around anti-discrimination on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability and age, have been incorporated into UK law by the Equality Act 2010. However Brexit will mean the EU law basis of these rights will disappear. This will not change the Equality Act or other UK legislation however if Parliament wanted to weaken such rights Brexit makes it much easier to do so given EU minimum standards of protection would no longer provide a backstop to any changes.

Furthermore, whilst many of the rights in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) find their way into UK law through the UK Human Rights Act (and not EU law) the protection of these rights may be subject to change arising out of any Government plans to consult on repealing the Human Rights Act and replacing it with a British Bill of Rights. Something that has been regularly threatened by the Conservative Government in recent years.

As we face a future outside the EU we must be vigilant against any attempt to weaken our human rights or equality legislation going forward. As Black members we have long campaigned for equality - in this political climate the challenges may be increasing but our

determination is greater still.

Conference believes the hard Brexit pushed by UKIP and the right-wing of the Tory Party would be an unmitigated disaster leading to job losses, price hikes and hitting those who can least afford it hardest. We welcome UNISON's initiative and report highlighting the EU referendum result and UNISON's exiting the EU strategic campaign and the current volatile and uncertain future.

That is why this motion calls on the union to pursue a number of key initiatives to tackle the principal of non-discrimination and equality and work with the National Executive Council to ensure UNISON, through our Labour link, make this Government and other devolved Governments remain accountable to the masses and ensure we protect our human rights, employment rights and civil liberties. Conference recognises that the struggles that Black members face began long before any mention of an EU referendum.

We therefore call on the National Executive Council to work with the National Black Members Committee to:

- 1) Recognise that the issue of immigration and free movement of people will continue to be high profile and liaise with Regional Black Members' Committees to share best practice and ideas on how to support members impacted by this and highlight the positive influence of immigration both to our public services and wider society;
- 2) Work with Labour Link to consider how we can encourage the Labour Party and other political leaders to acknowledge and address the issues most affecting our Black members, e.g. falling incomes, insecure jobs, unaffordable housing and cuts to public services – which led to many feeling disengaged;
- 3) Continue to campaign against any form of racial violence, encouraging members to report such incidents and providing support to UNISON members who experience any form of hate crime;
- 4) Seek to work with Labour Link to gain a commitment from the Labour Party for a complete equality review and removing such parts of the law that increases the threat to our civil liberties or has a negative impact on equality legislation.

*National Black Members' Committee*

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## 76. Defend Freedom of Movement

Conference notes:

- 1) The continuing rhetoric from politicians and from many media outlets that foment division through the scapegoating of migrants, refugees and Muslims;
- 2) That as many as three million EU citizens resident in the UK, including many UNISON members, are living through a period of uncertainty since the Brexit referendum result due to the lack of clarity

- from the Government regarding their rights to continue residing and working in Britain;
- 3) That access to health services, in particular, is under threat through the insistence that EU citizens living in the UK are required, in certain circumstances, to carry independent private health insurance;
  - 4) That UNISON is currently prioritising defending members who are migrants and actively seeking to recruit new members from amongst the EU workforce;
  - 5) That Theresa May's stance in the Brexit negotiations means surrendering the existing EU-based rights of free movement to/from the UK, while trying to keep access to EU markets;
  - 6) That 54% of the British public are in favour of granting immediate and full residency rights to EU citizens currently in Britain (with this majority increasing to 67% if EU governments were to reciprocate with a similar guarantee to Britons in EU countries).
- Conference resolves:
- a) To campaign vigorously to defend any member under threat of deportation;
  - b) To defend access to health services, free at the point of use, for all those who need it;
  - c) To defend existing EU-based rights of free movement to/from the UK, and to seek to extend such rights of movement;
  - d) To call on Labour Link to ask the Labour Party to carry a policy of defence of existing EU-based free movement to/from the UK.

*Salford City*

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## 77. Defend Freedom of Movement

- Conference notes:
- 1) The continuing rhetoric from the politicians and some media that creates division by scapegoating migrants, refugees and Muslims;
  - 2) That there are as many as 3 million EU citizens resident in the UK, including many UNISON members living through a period of horrible uncertainty following the Brexit vote, not knowing if they will be able to continue living and working in Britain;
  - 3) That EU citizens living in the UK are required in certain circumstances to carry independent, private health insurance, threatening access to health services;
  - 4) That UNISON defends members who are migrants and actively recruits among the EU workforce;
  - 5) That Theresa May's stance in the Brexit negotiations threatens to surrender the existing EU-based rights of free movement to/from the UK, in return for access to EU markets.
- Conference resolves:
- a) To campaign vigorously to defend any member

- b) under threat of deportation;
- b) To demand access to health services, free at the point of use for all those who need it;
- c) To defend existing EU-based rights of free movement to/from the UK and to seek to extend such rights of movement;
- d) To call on Labour Link to ask the Labour Party to carry a policy of defence of existing EU-based free movement to and from the UK.

*Sandwell*

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## 78. Right to remain for EU citizens post-Brexit

- Conference notes:
- 1) That the government has refused to agree that citizens of other EU countries who are UK residents will be allowed to remain in the UK, if the UK leaves the EU;
  - 2) That these EU citizens have moved to the UK legally and in good faith and in many cases have made their lives here. They are our neighbours, friends, colleagues and fellow union members;
  - 3) That our union is already undertaking work to support those members directly affected;
  - 4) That the implication of the Government's refusal to guarantee their right to remain is that it envisages the possibility that it will have these people identified, detained and deported;
  - 5) That this could result in our members being asked to carry out work to identify, detain or deport EU citizens.
- Conference:
- a) Welcomes the work already being undertaken by UNISON to support members who are non-UK EU/EEA citizens;
  - b) Calls on the Government to immediately guarantee the rights of EU and EEA citizens to remain in the UK and;
  - c) Calls on UNISON's National Executive Council to campaign and lobby against any policy resulting in the removal of EU/EEA citizens from the UK.

*Local Government Organisations*

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## 79. Working people must not pay the price for Brexit

Conference notes the Conservative Government's plans for Brexit which represent a significant risk for working people in the UK. The EU has played a key role in protecting workers from exploitation, inequality, hazards and discrimination, and in promoting good employment practices. The referendum result does make Brexit a reality and that democratic decision must be respected, however the trade union movement must now ensure that the Government does not use leaving Europe as

an opportunity for deliver a bonfire of those established employment and equality rights.

It has become clear the Tories' vision for Brexit is of the UK acting as a low-tax, low-regulation haven for unscrupulous businesses. With no concrete plan for creating a stable economy – or how our public services will be properly funded – the need for stability and reassurance for working people has never been greater. Hard-working public sector workers from Europe who came to the UK to work for our NHS, schools and social care, must also be reassured they are welcome and can remain.

Conference believes that employment rights must be protected in full and that any plan for Brexit must include a provision for investment in quality jobs and the protection of living standards. Furthermore, any trade deal with the EU and other major economies must include a fair deal for public services, rather than the threat of further privatisation represented in the now stalled Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations.

The North East is set to lose the most in terms of funding as a result of Brexit, having received £195.4 million in European Social Fund grants and £296.0 million in European Regional Development Fund grants. The combined total of these two figures is the equivalent of £189 per head over a seven-year period – the most money received by any region in the UK. Given the North East has already been on the receiving end of some of the deepest public sector cuts in the country (without the benefit of so-called sweetheart deals enjoyed by some parts of the country) the stakes could not be higher.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Ensure that UNISON plays a key stakeholder role in Brexit negotiations;
- 2) Campaign to ensure that the UK Government does not repeal any current rights guaranteed by the EU, or water down or dismantle trade union and worker rights;
- 3) Campaign to ensure the rights of existing EU workers to remain in the UK are protected, whilst ensuring movement of workers in the EU as a key reciprocal right in any agreement that allows UK access to the single market;
- 4) Work with regions to ensure engagement with MPs, MEPs, Councillors, citizens, employees, trade unions, employers and community organisations on alternative economic strategies that benefit working people in the region within the context of Brexit.

*Northern*

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## 80. Protecting Workers Rights Post EU exit

Conference notes that when the UK leaves the European Union (EU) and re-negotiates a new EU relationship there is a real danger that workers' rights,

including, but not limited to health and safety, anti-discrimination and agency worker rights derived from EU law could be lost or watered down through the Great Repeal Bill process and the negotiation of new trade deals.

Conference further notes many current employment rights result from case law emanating from the European Court of Justice.

It is vital that post-EU exit these rights are preserved, and if possible, enhanced.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council:

- 1) Work with the ETUC, TUC, STUC, WTUC and ICTU to review employment legislation that may be at risk;
- 2) Work with Labour Link to make sure the Labour Party fully understand the arguments around protecting and improving current employment rights;
- 3) Ensure political lobbying of MPs includes MPs and Lords of all parties, including the Conservative Party;
- 4) Work with MEPs and devolved parliamentary and assembly members to ensure that devolution issues are properly considered and full protections offered to devolved nations;
- 5) Work with our self organised groups so that equalities are at the heart of our response to post-EU exit issues around employment rights and health and safety;
- 6) Develop resources for branches to support them in their campaigning with our members and the wider public on why it is important to protect workers' rights.

*Coventry and St Cross Hospitals  
West Midlands*

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## 81. Building a Better UK After the Leave Vote

Conference notes that the result of the EU membership referendum was a major political shock as it went against the wishes of the Conservative Government, the major opposition parties, big business, the City Of London, as well as most of the leadership of the trade union movement.

Conference rejects the notion that the leave vote was primarily a consequence of social conservatism or resurgent nationalism. Rather, Conference views the preceding six years of austerity policies, and indeed some 40 years of neo-liberal economics, as causing tremendous public dissatisfaction with the status quo.

Conference believes that it is the task of the trade union and labour movement to speak to and for the concerns of those who want meaningful change in our society.

Conference notes the campaign work done by UNISON and the wider TUC to highlight the importance of the EU level in employment rights, but notes that these arguments were not sufficient to sway enough votes for a remain vote.

Conference believes that this is a reflection of the reality of working life for too many people in the UK, which involves low wages and insecure employment.

Conference believes that defending existing, inadequate, employment protections was not a compelling argument for millions of working people. Rather, we need a more ambitious vision of how employment should be regulated, not only through minimum rights but a more comprehensive system of collective bargaining.

Conference notes that the UK's membership of the EU has provided a mixed inheritance. While some minimum employment rights are linked to our EU membership, there have been some EU level decisions and requirements that limit nation states from pursuing policies in the interests of workers (e.g. *Alemo-Herron*, EU procurement rules).

Conference notes that the removal of the EU level as a higher authority will increase the power of the UK government, and that given the present Government's hostility to trade unions it will be necessary to increase our campaigning work to defend and expand workers' rights.

Conference believes that the leave vote does not, and must not, mean that the UK becomes a less welcoming society. Conference believes that it is just as important that EU nationals have their rights respected in the UK as it is for UK citizens to have their rights respected in other countries.

Conference reasserts UNISON's commitment to internationalism and to equality and that the UK leaving the EU must not be allowed to impact negatively upon these principles.

Conference believes that we cannot risk a perceived permanent schism of a portrayed clash between metropolitan liberal and small-town small-c conservatives.

We are all workers, we all need public services and the welfare state – we need to build a common agenda and build a better UK outside the EU.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign to build public support for workers' rights and stronger regulation of employment in the UK;
- 2) Work to ensure that the potential benefits of being outside EU procurement rules are realised to ensure that public sector, local, and ethical provider organisations are favoured in commissioning decisions;
- 3) Continue to support the right to remain of EU nationals through highlighting the positive contribution to society of migrant workers through campaigns such as 'One Day Without Us';
- 4) Campaign to ensure that both EU nationals in the UK, and UK nationals in the EU are treated fairly and equitably, and utilise as appropriate links with European unions and bodies such as the ETUC to lobby for fair treatment of UK nationals in the EU.

*Manchester*

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81.1

In fourth paragraph, delete all after "employment rights" and add new second and third sentences:

"Whilst highlighting the positive aspects of EU workers rights and recent improved social provisions in public procurement during the EU referendum campaign, UNISON was also critical of the EU's harmful austerity policies combined with a drive toward greater competition with a pro business and profit emphasis over workers rights, market liberalisation of public services, free trade and a downward push on wages. That is why UNISON campaigned for a 'better Europe' during its campaign."

Delete fifth paragraph and replace with:

"Conference notes that these arguments were not sufficient to sway enough votes for a remain vote and that this is a reflection of the reality of working life for too many people in the UK – which involves low wages and insecure employment."

Add at end of point 1):

"through UNISON's exiting the EU campaign which calls for existing employment and trade union rights to be maintained and a new legal mechanism to upgrade UK rights in line with improved social provisions in the EU and favourable European Court of Justice rulings so that UK workers rights don't fall behind."

*National Executive Council*

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## 82. What we want from Brexit

Conference notes that:

- 1) The debate about what Britain will look like after Brexit is presently dominated by right wing voices;
- 2) That Theresa May has set out a vision of a Britain hostile to immigrants and unwelcoming to migrant workers who are here;
- 3) That the TUC has begun to set out what issues are at stake in the Brexit negotiations.

Conference believes that:

- a) Workers need to unite against the divisive Tory agenda that will only assist our enemies;
- b) Brexit gives us a chance to say what sort of Britain we want;
- c) The trade union movement needs to put forward its own vision of the future after Brexit;
- d) We should oppose both the EU single market regime of pro-business rules and any attack on immigrants and the free movement of labour. Migration is not a burden and we do not believe in the slogan "British jobs for British workers".

Conference believes that the principles that should guide the trade unions over Brexit are:

- i) End austerity and all attacks on unions - repeal the anti-union laws;
- ii) Oppose all attacks on migrant workers in Britain.

Full and indefinite rights guaranteed now for all EU nationals, and supporting the free movement of labour;

- iii) Solidarity with refugees and allowing them to come to Britain;
- iv) Maintaining public funding of all EU regional and social development fund programmes;
- v) No reductions in workplace, social or equality rights;
- vi) No to the single market with its restrictions on nationalisation and no to any return of the TTIP deal or any other that favours the multinationals. Use the coming freedom from EU rules to begin the process now of taking back Royal Mail and the railways and buses into democratic public ownership;
- vii) Effective action on climate change, a ban on fracking and an agriculture policy focused on access to good-quality affordable food and environmental protection;
- viii) For internationalism and solidarity with workers across the world. Full support for all struggles against austerity and racism.

Conference resolves to:

- A) Campaign for these polices within the TUC;
- B) Ask Labour Link to raise them within the Labour Party.

*London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority*

- 3) The establishment of full union recognition rights in all workplaces to negotiate and collective agreements for all workers;
- 4) Bring the privatised public utilities, including the energy companies and the threatened steel industry, back into public ownership. Invest in renewable energy – publicly-owned and controlled. No fracking;
- 5) Re-nationalise all rail, bus and ferry services to build an integrated, low-pollution public transport system;
- 6) Take Royal Mail back into public ownership to guarantee our postal services;
- 7) Hands off our NHS – for a high-quality, free National Health Service under democratic public ownership and control;
- 8) Rejection of all trade agreements with the EU, the USA, other nations and other trading blocs which increase corporate power and its ability to take over our public services and weaken workers' rights.

*Salford City*

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## Northern Ireland

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### 84. EU Exit – Protecting the Northern Ireland Peace Process

The current position of the UK Government for a 'hard' exit from the EU places the Northern Ireland peace process in severe jeopardy and has serious implications for the island of Ireland as a whole.

This peace agreement received the consent of the majority of the people in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland by way of referendum. It is an international peace treaty co-signed by the UK Government and the Irish Government and registered with the United Nations. European Community law, its conventions and charters and access both to the European Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights are explicit in the provisions of the Good Friday Agreement and the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

The desire to protect our precarious peace process was a major feature of the successful trade union campaign, led by UNISON Northern Ireland, which resulted in a majority vote to 'remain' in Northern Ireland. The desire of the UK Government to pursue a 'hard' exit from the EU is a major threat to the principles of consent and equivalence of rights across the island of Ireland that are core principles of the peace process. It will undoubtedly be followed by a sustained attack on the Human Rights Act, which would represent another disastrous blow to the equality and human rights provisions and unfinished business of the Good Friday

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### 83. Post EU Referendum

It is clear from the post- election research that a big section of working people and their families saw the referendum as an opportunity to strike back at austerity and the establishment. However, as the official leave and remain campaigns relied heavily on whipping up anti-migrant sentiment, then it has also led to a rise in racism and legitimate fear for many workers in Britain.

Currently the different wings of the Tory party are fighting over how best to defend the profits of their friends in big business in or out of the single market.

Conference believes that the labour and trade union movement must campaign for a Brexit in the interests of working people – for a socialist, internationalist exit from the EU directives and treaties that attack worker's rights and that would block a government bringing back into public ownership the service's the Tories have sold off over the last 30 years.

- 1) Defend the right to asylum. Oppose all racist immigration controls. Guarantee the rights of EU citizens in the UK to remain. For workers' unity against racism and austerity;
- 2) Stop the 'race to the bottom' – for a minimum wage of £10 per hour for all workers with no age restrictions;

Agreement. Whilst Theresa May can repeat the mantra that there will be “no return to the borders of the past”, it is increasingly clear that a ‘hard’ exit will result in the return of a border across the island of Ireland which will damage the fragile peace that has been hard won. Exit from the EU customs union in particular will also have profound social and economic consequences for both jurisdictions in Ireland.

The current political situation in Northern Ireland has dramatically destabilised resulting in the collapse of our Government after only nine months and fresh elections in March 2017. At the time of writing this motion, the future is unclear. It is to the shame of the UK Government that the implications for peace in Northern Ireland of a ‘hard’ exit from the EU have been completely ignored.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to spearhead a campaign aimed at making protection of the Northern Ireland peace agreement a negotiating priority within the EU exit negotiations and to use its influence within the TUC, ICTU, STUC, the Wales TUC and the ETUC to secure the support of the international trade union movement for this position. It further urges the National Executive Council to use its influence within Labour Link in particular, with political parties in all five jurisdictions, and with the EU, to garner support for the protection of the peace agreement as a priority.

*Northern Ireland*

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84.1

Insert after the fourth paragraph:

“Conference recognises that the reintroduction of a hard border in Ireland would have an impact on Scotland, Wales and England in relation to freedom of movement, trade and solidarity within these islands.”

*Scotland*

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## Equalities

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### 85. Standing together for LGBT equality

Conference believes UNISON’s championing of public services and public service values has never been more important. Conservative government austerity cuts have left public services reeling, struggling to meet ever rising demand from services users. Service user needs become greater and more complex as they struggle with financial insecurity due to stagnant or falling wages, redundancy and welfare cuts, insecurity and fears for the future. Yet the Conservative government bulldozes ahead with its anti-public service, anti-worker, anti-trade

union propaganda, presenting our hard won safety net of workers’ rights and human rights as bureaucratic red tape, to be cut away.

Conference further believes that the voice and validation given to division and scapegoating in campaigning around the European Union (EU) referendum continue to distort public debate. Referendum campaigning paid scant attention to the actual impact of EU membership, with much focus on Black communities and faith groups, and on migrant workers from outside the EU. It fed the fears of disenfranchised and disadvantaged communities. Conference condemns the racism, xenophobia and anti-immigrant tone evident in much campaigning; conference expresses concern about the clear damage to community relations and individual safety and to values of solidarity and equality.

With the public service equality agenda increasingly pushed to the side, Conference is further concerned that minority public services which never had popular appeal are at risk of disappearing altogether. Authoritative research carried out for UNISON in 2013 found:

- 1) LGBT people were facing greater financial hardship, problems finding safe accommodation and increased marginalisation and invisibility;
- 2) A reduction of specialised LGBT services, including housing support and homelessness services, anti-hate crime and youth services, support and help-line services, mental health and sexual health services, and gender identity services, at exactly the time these services were more needed than ever;
- 3) A fear that progress on challenging anti-LGBT discrimination was being reversed and that homophobia, biphobia and transphobia were on the rise again;
- 4) LGBT concerns and needs are treated as less important: a ‘nice thing to do’ that could be dropped in harder times;
- 5) A loss of valuable LGBT staff and staff with specialist knowledge that was difficult to replace.

Conference welcomes further research carried out in 2016 to update these findings. The updated findings are an important campaigning tool to show the damage wrought by the Tory’s failing austerity policies. They show the urgency of defending services that meet the needs of our diverse communities – services that save lives.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council, working with the national LGBT committee, to:

- a) Publicise the research findings as widely as possible, as part of our campaign against austerity and for public services;
- b) Use the findings to inform our work through Labour Link to influence Labour Party policy and priorities;
- c) Use the research as a recruitment tool, highlighting the need to be in a union at a time of savage cuts to LGBT people’s jobs and worsening conditions;
- d) Continue to push UNISON’s public service and

equality values in the face of low pay, exploitation and division, challenging the politics of hate and urging individuals and communities to stand together for equality.

*National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee*

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85.1

In fourth paragraph, insert after “update these findings.”:

“Additional points highlighted in the updated research include:

- i) LGBT people have a greater need for services because of discrimination they face;
- ii) But they are a low priority for public and charitable funding, so face a double bind with public spending cuts;
- iii) Fears about public service cuts identified in 2013 have become a reality;
- iv) Year on year funding cuts have left LGBT services focussing on survival;
- v) Specialist services are increasingly reliant on volunteers, which is not sustainable.”

At end, add new action point:

“e) continue to integrate LGBT equality issues into our Public Service Champions campaign.”

*Scottish Electricity*

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## 86. 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 still remains low while 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 it is vital 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 has increased in the last five 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 in 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. As cuts continue across all sectors 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 cutting services, being able to challenge where and why cuts 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 cuts 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 Self Organised Group. In the Northern Region for example, there is a very active Black Members group who have continued to provide key support for Black members in the region. Nevertheless, further work is required to support Black members in the workplace.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council 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 implementing cuts, and ensure Black members take a lead role in scrutinising these assessments together with representatives from other SOGs;
- 3) Encourage branches to work with employers to seek to ensure more apprenticeship opportunities are open to Black people.

*Newcastle City*

## Racism

### 87. Challenging Racism and Xenophobia

Conference is deeply alarmed at the rise in visible, expressed racism over the past year. Across the UK, racist attacks on Black communities and those perceived to be of migrant backgrounds rose dramatically in the aftermath of the EU referendum result. This legitimisation of public displays of prejudice has led to UNISON's migrant worker members working in public services finding themselves on the sharp end of a toxic public debate, heightened by the election of US President Donald Trump. It has also highlighted the continued vulnerability of the UK's settled and long-established Black communities to racist attacks.

Conference believes this has been decades in the making, with scaremongering and demonization of immigrants accompanied by legislative attacks on migrant communities, affecting their ability to access public services, private housing and banking accounts. A new crime of illegal working makes migrant workers more vulnerable than ever before. It will allow immigration officials wide ranging powers to seize property, to seize earnings, to close down businesses, to enter and search properties. This could lead to a twelve month prison sentence with an unlimited fine for anyone found working without the right papers - grossly disproportionate and likely to make undocumented migrant workers even more vulnerable to exploitative employers.

Conference welcomes the leadership and activism shown by our migrant worker networks for EU migrant workers, African migrant workers and Filipino migrant workers who ensure that UNISON's work is led by their voices and experiences. Conference also welcomes national resources developed to support the work of branches and activists in challenging racism and xenophobia and believes this should be built upon and extended in the coming year.

Conference fears that the UK exit from the EU will be used as an excuse for yet more attacks on migrant workers as well as the removal of workplace rights regarded as 'red-tape'. This will exacerbate the UK's economic problems, leave public services still reeling from austerity, divide our communities and lead to a race to the bottom at work.

Conference welcomes the continuing work by branches, activists and self organised groups to challenge racism in the workplace but believes that this needs to be strengthened in the years ahead.

Trade unions have a unique capacity to bring together workers from all races and communities to tackle the fundamental causes of division and anxiety: better pay and job security, better public services, a fairer labour market and a country that serves all its people, not the

few. Whether it is the Tory Party's claim to be the 'worker's party' or UKIP's attempts to scaremonger and divide our community, we as trade unionists have a duty to challenge them. This is a challenge that UNISON has always met, and will do so again.

Conference asserts that the only real answer to low pay and exploitation for all workers is stronger employment rights protections, stronger collective bargaining and trade union solidarity against racism. Conference further asserts that the trade union movement must stand at the forefront of tackling racism in the workplace and in our communities.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) A renewed focus on collective bargaining and trade union activity to challenge racism in the workplace and beyond;
- 2) Resist attempts by the Government to strip away employment protections at work;
- 3) Work with UNISON's self organised groups and migrant worker networks to counter discrimination and attacks on migrant workers at national and workplace level;
- 4) Continue to support the TUC's march to mark UN anti-racism day;
- 5) Continue to develop, promote and implement training materials and resources in conjunction with self organised groups and branches to challenge discrimination and prejudice;
- 6) Work with a wide coalition of anti-racist groups at national and local level to support local community organising against all manifestations of racism, anti-semitism and xenophobia, including branches affiliating and working with HOPE not hate, Show Racism the Red Card, Stand up to Racism and Unite Against Fascism;
- 7) Work with groups such as the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, the Migrant Rights Network, Refugee Action and the Refugee Council to advocate for a rights based approach to migrant workers and challenge discriminatory treatment of vulnerable people.

*National Executive Council*

#### 87.1

After existing third paragraph, insert new paragraph:  
 "Conference recognises that the attacks on Black communities and migrant workers include the commission of criminal offences which amount to hate crimes. It notes with great concern the significant increase in hate crime incidents post Brexit, and that 2 out of 5 hate crimes go unreported. It recognises that hate crime may have more than one motivating factor and that hate crimes against Black people, disabled people, LGBT people and

women can be in relation to more than one protected characteristic.”

In point 3) delete “and migrant workers networks” and insert:

“migrant workers networks and all appropriate sections of the union”

After existing point 7) insert new points as follows:

“8) Encourage branches to take a proactive approach to challenge and tackle hate crime in all its forms, highlighting the fact that hate crime incidents can have more than one motivating factor;

9) Promote and distribute resources such as a poster and leaflets to raise awareness of hate crime and encourage members to report all hate incidents or hate crimes.”

*National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee*

- 5) That Muslims are being targeted by the government as an enemy within through the Prevent agenda;
- 6) The emergence of the Black Lives Matter movement reminds us that institutional racism is still prevalent. Conference believes:
  - a) That we must combat attempts to divide ordinary people and defend the positive role migrant workers play in Britain;
  - b) It is not migrants and refugees that undermine wages and public services, it is government driven cuts and austerity.

Conference therefore resolves to affiliate to Stand Up To Racism (SUTR) and publicise its initiatives to UNISON members.

*Birmingham*

87.2

After the final sentence in the first paragraph add a new paragraph as follows

“Conference recognises that racism is a product of a failed capitalist system which is incapable of providing jobs, homes, education and health service for all. Throughout the history of capitalism racism has been one of its many tools used, to try and divide the workers movement.”

Then include a new point 1) after “Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:”

“1) Support a programme of massive public works to provide the jobs at trade union rates of pay and council homes and investment in our education and Health services to remove some of the prime causes of racism.”

Then renumber the other points accordingly.

*Hackney*

88.1

In point 2) delete “black” and replace with “Black”  
 In action point a) after “in” delete “Britain” and replace with “the UK”

Add new second sentence in action point b) after “austerity.”:

“We are committed to Challenging Racism in the Workplace and beyond and welcome and support affiliation to Stand up To Racism, a decision taken by the National Executive Council in January 2017.”

Delete final paragraph and replace with:

“We therefore resolve to continue to fight the increase in racial hatred since the EU referendum vote in 2016 and challenge all forms of discrimination as core aspects of UNISON’s work for 2017 and beyond and publicise these initiatives, and those of our affiliated partners, to members.”

*National Executive Council*

**88. Stand up to Racism**

Conference notes:

- 1) The attempts by some politicians and the right-wing media to stoke division through the scapegoating of migrants, refugees and Muslims;
- 2) The election of Donald Trump as US president on a platform that including vicious racism towards Mexicans, Muslims and black people – this will give further encouragement to racists here too;
- 3) That anti-migrant rhetoric has led to violence and opens the door to the growth of racism, Islamophobia and anti-semitism;
- 4) That since the referendum there has been a rise in hate crime principally directed at migrant workers. Whichever way trade unionists voted in the EU referendum, it is vital that we stand in solidarity with migrants and refugees;

**89. Stand Up To Racism**

Conference notes:

- 1) The attempts by some politicians and the right-wing media to stoke division through the scapegoating of migrants, refugees and Muslims;
- 2) The election of Donald Trump as US President on a platform that includes vicious racism towards Mexicans, Muslims and black people
- 3) That politicians in both the official leave and remain EU referendum campaigns used unacceptable rhetoric against migrants and refugees;
- 4) That anti-migrant rhetoric has led to violence including the murder of Jo Cox MP and opens the door to the growth of racism, Islamophobia and anti-Semitism;
- 5) That since the EU referendum there has been a rise in hate crime principally directed at migrant workers;

- 6) That Muslims are being targeted by the government as the “enemy within” through the Prevent agenda;
- 7) The continuing deaths of killing of black people in police custody and the emergence of the Black Lives Matter movement shows that the continuation of institutional racism.  
Conference believes:
  - a) That we must combat attempts to divide working people and defend the positive role migrant workers play in Britain;
  - b) That it is not migrants and refugees that undermine wages and public services, it is cuts and austerity.  
Conference resolves to:
    - i) Affiliate to Stand Up To Racism;
    - ii) Support its activities and publicise them amongst our members.

*Salford City*

89.1

In point 2) delete “black” and replace with “Black”  
 In point a) after “in” delete “Britain” and insert “the UK”  
 Add second sentence in point b) after “austerity.”:  
 “We are committed to Challenging Racism in the Workplace and beyond and welcome and support affiliation to Stand up To Racism, a decision taken by the National Executive Council in January 2017.”  
 Delete current point (i) and replace with:  
 “i) Continue to fight the increase in racial hatred since the EU referendum vote in 2016 and challenge all forms of discrimination as core aspects of UNISON’s work and support Stand Up To Racism;”

*National Executive Council*

## 90. Stand Up To Racism

Conference notes:

- 1) The attempts by some politicians and the right-wing media to stoke division through the scapegoating of migrants, refugees and Muslims;
- 2) That politicians in both the official Leave and Remain EU referendum campaigns used unacceptable rhetoric against migrants and refugees;
- 3) That anti-migrant rhetoric has led to violence including the murder of Jo Cox MP and opens the door to the growth of racism, Islamophobia and anti-semitism;
- 4) That since the referendum there has been a rise in hate crime principally directed at migrant workers;
- 5) That Muslims are being targeted by the government as the “enemy within” through the Prevent agenda;
- 6) The killing of Dalian Atkinson by police and the emergence of the Black Lives Matter movement reminds that institutional racism is still prevalent.

68

Conference believes:

- a) That we must combat attempts to divide working people and support the stance taken by Jeremy Corbyn in defence of the positive role migrant workers play in Britain;
  - b) That it is not migrants and refugees that undermine wages and public services, it is cuts and austerity.  
Conference resolves to:
    - i) Affiliate to Stand Up To Racism;
    - ii) Publicise its activities amongst our members.
- London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority*

90.1

In point a) after “in” delete “Britain” and insert “the UK”  
 Add second sentence in point b) after “austerity.”:  
 “We are committed to Challenging Racism in the Workplace and beyond and welcome and support affiliation to Stand up To Racism, a decision taken by the National Executive Council in January 2017.”

Delete current point i) and replace with:

“i) Continue to fight the increase in racial hatred since the EU referendum vote in 2016 and challenge all forms of discrimination as core aspects of UNISON’s work and support;”

*National Executive Council*

## 91. Stand Up to Racism

Conference notes:

- 1) The attempts by some politicians and the right-wing media to stoke division through the scapegoating of migrants, refugees and Muslims;
- 2) The election of Donald Trump as US president on a platform that including vicious racism towards Mexicans, Muslims and Black people – this will give further encouragement to racists here too;
- 3) That anti-migrant rhetoric has led to violence and opens the door to the growth of racism, Islamophobia and antisemitism;
- 4) That since the referendum there has been a rise in ‘hate crime’ principally directed at migrant workers. Whichever way trade unionists voted in the EU referendum, it is vital that we stand in solidarity with migrants and refugees;
- 5) That Muslims are being targeted by the government as an enemy within through the Prevent agenda;
- 6) The emergence of the Black Lives Matter movement reminds us that institutional racism is still prevalent. Conference believes:
  - i) That we must combat attempts to divide ordinary people and defend the positive role migrant workers play in Britain;
  - ii) It is not migrants and refugees that undermine

wages and public services, it is cuts and austerity.  
 Conference resolves to affiliate to Stand Up To Racism (SUTR) Scotland, publicise its initiatives to members, and to be part of local SUTR committees.  
*City of Glasgow*

91.1

In action point a) after “in” delete “Britain” and replace with “the UK”

Add new second sentence in action point b) after “austerity.”:

“We are committed to Challenging Racism in the Workplace and beyond and welcome and support affiliation to Stand up To Racism, a decision taken by the National Executive Council in January 2017.”

Delete final paragraph and replace with:

“We therefore resolve to continue to fight the increase in racial hatred since the EU referendum vote in 2016 and challenge all forms of discrimination as core aspects of UNISON’s work for 2017 and beyond and publicise these initiatives to members, and those of our affiliated partners, and work with SUTR Scotland.”

*National Executive Council*

## Civil Rights

### 92. Human Rights under Attack

Conference is appalled that the Conservatives have re-stated their commitment to repeal the Human Rights Act (HRA) and replace it with a British Bill of Rights.

This, like the Trade Union Act, is an ideological attack on our rights and freedoms. Workers rights and human rights are inseparable. We had to fight to win them, and now we must fight to defend them.

The Act provides a means for those who have been mistreated or failed by the system to challenge their treatment and hold authorities to account.

It provides essential protection for all of us when we’re at our most vulnerable and as the recent attacks on trade unions via the Trade Union Act and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 demonstrates, this government cannot be trusted to respect these rights on their own.

It is worth remembering that without the European Convention on Human Rights the gross negligence behind the deaths at Hillsborough would never have been uncovered.

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

- 1) Article 8: right to respect for private and family life – has been used successfully to recognise rights for many people in all aspects of their life for example; for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people; elderly couples wanting to live together even when one requires residential care and enabling families to continue to live with their disabled children;
- 2) Article 11: freedom of assembly and association – this specifically states “Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests”. This article has been used successfully in the past by trade unions to expel British National Party members. It also enables us to join peaceful protests and participate in pride marches.

The decision to exit the EU is a further threat to human rights as EU law provides many important human rights protections. It is vitally important that these are carefully considered in negotiations around leaving the EU, to ensure that we do not weaken any existing human rights protections, especially where these apply to some of the most vulnerable groups in society.

Withdrawing from the EU does not mean withdrawing from the separate European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). However, whilst Theresa May has indicated that the Government does not intend to withdraw from the Convention; trust in this government’s intentions on this issue is at an all time low.

The Human Rights Act strengthens our democracy, giving everyone a voice, and ensuring the powerful do not go unchecked.

- Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:
- a) Continue to promote understanding and use of human rights as an essential principle in defending the rights of our members and a vital tool for trade unionists and groups facing discrimination to challenge inequality and injustice;
  - b) Work with appropriate structures of the union, including the self organised groups, General Political Fund and Labour Link, to campaign against the repeal of the HRA;
  - c) Support Liberty’s campaign to defend the HRA.

*East Midlands*

## Decentralisation

### 93. Campaigning for Real Devolution

Conference notes that the current Conservative Government has continued to pursue the devolution agenda championed by the previous Labour Government,

but in a manner contrary to the true principles of devolution.

In many cases this now means devolving responsibility for service delivery without providing adequate funding. In practice this means the Conservative Government's devolution agenda is about Westminster imposing cuts on regions and then blaming them for reductions in service delivery, rather than the power to make real changes in our communities.

The North East continues to be disproportionately impacted by central government austerity cuts which make it challenging for local authorities to deliver essential public services. The current gap in social care funding highlights one significant impact of the Government's continuing austerity.

Conference believes that real devolution can be positive for public services and public service workers. Real devolution can give both communities and those delivering public services at a local level greater flexibility and more say over those services than if they are delivered exclusively from the centre. Real devolution must include the ability to determine funding and tax-raising powers, as well as decision-making and responsibility.

The Northern Public Service Alliance and UNISON have been working with local authority leaders to develop a narrative which challenges the Government's narrow approach to devolution, whilst building alliances across trade unions and community groups to campaign for a better deal for the English Regions.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work to ensure that devolution does not become a race to the bottom, with cities and regions undercutting each other to attract business investment with a knock on impact on public service provision;
- 2) Lobby government for genuine consultation with local authorities and residents of those areas before further devolution deals are finalised;
- 3) Work with MPs and councillors who share our aims and values on devolution to develop a clear economic and growth plan for English regions.

*Northern*

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93.1

Delete last sentence of fourth paragraph (beginning: "Real devolution...") and replace with:

"There is a high degree of inequality between English regions in regard to both their ability to raise tax revenue and the level of social need. It is important to ensure that less-affluent areas of the country are not disadvantaged by any moves toward 'fiscal devolution' and that mechanisms are in place for resources to be distributed on the basis of need."

Insert new point 4):

70

"4) Continue to provide a framework within existing structures for UNISON regions in England to take a view on city-region proposals."

*Manchester*

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#### 94. Devolution and cuts to Council budgets

Conference, most council budgets are being massively reduced due to Government funding cuts. Over the last six years the majority of councils will have seen over 50% slashed from their Government funding. This is leading to situations where a number of councils are struggling to meet their statutory responsibilities.

Conference, against this background it is not surprising that some councils are exploring the devolution offers previously made by boy George when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer.

This situation of so called 'devolution' is leading to major issues with councils being pushed to accept elected Mayors in a combined authority with some funding for infrastructure etc. development.

However, against the background of massive and consistent funding cuts this is leading to situations where councils have taken over responsibility for already underfunded services and are being forced to make major cuts due to budget reductions e.g. 'Devo Manc' where responsibility for the NHS services in the area was devolved, this is leading to councils being blamed for Government cuts.

Conference therefore resolves that UNISON should:

- 1) Campaign for properly funded public services;
- 2) Oppose the inclusion of any NHS services in these devolution arrangements;
- 3) Campaign to ensure that devolution arrangements have public support and do not lead to additional layers of bureaucracy.

*Yorkshire and Humberside*

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94.1

In the fourth paragraph, add a full stop after "...due to budget restrictions" and delete the remaining text that begins "e.g. 'Devo Manc' where responsibility...".

Amend point 2) to read:

"Ensure that the NHS's principles of direct public provision, comprehensive services planned to meet health needs, and services being available on the basis of need and not ability to pay, are upheld or reinforced in any devolution of health services."

Insert new point 4):

"4) Continue to provide a framework within existing structures for UNISON regions in England to take a view on city-region proposals."

*Manchester*

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## 95. The Chaos of Devolution – threat and opportunity

The Government's ideas regarding devolution to the English regions is at best a chaotic 'bun fight' between regions, at worst an ideologically driven attempt to devalue and undermine local government and replace it with a regional mayoral system whatever the feelings of the local communities and the politicians.

In the midst of all this chaos and uncertainty are our members within a many different branches encompassing combined authorities and transport, local government but also in some regions health, community, private contractors and the police. Hanging over all these branches are the possibilities of job cuts through sharing of services, further out-sourcing and attacks on our terms and conditions.

Conference there are also opportunities for our members, with branches to working together, outside of their silos, to collectively protect our jobs and terms and conditions. But this needs organisation and branches working in concert with a clear vision and agreed aims.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with representatives of local government, combined authority branches and any branches that might be affected directly in specific regions, to develop a cohesive response to the on-going devolution process and to communicate this to our members in those effected branches and communities;
- 2) Ask Labour Link to work with the Labour Party to develop a properly planned, developed set of proposals that Labour can implement, bringing meaningful devolution and democracy to local communities across the country.

*West Yorkshire Transport*

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95.1

Add at the end of the third paragraph (currently ending "...clear vision and agreed aims.):

"There are opportunities too in the emergence of the combined authority or city-region scale as an important arena for political debate, especially where local politicians are more amenable to pursuing progressive policies than the Conservative central government."

Re-number point 2) as point 3)

Insert new point 2):

"2) Continue to provide a framework within existing structures for UNISON regions in England to take a view on city-region proposals."

*Manchester*

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## Environment

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### 96. Climate Change and a Just Transition

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

Conference recognises that global warming is already with us with 2016 being the hottest year on record and increasing extreme weather events causing havoc to communities in the UK and elsewhere, threatening public services and putting significant pressure on government and council budgets.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to link with other unions and organisations to campaign for government measures to reduce carbon use in order to meet the target of reducing global warming to below 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels and to move to a low carbon economy.

Conference notes that investment, including by pension funds, in fossil fuel extraction is contributing to the continued exploitation of carbon reserves which is the major factor in the human contribution to global warming and contrary to the aims of moving to a low carbon economy.

However, Conference recognises that the transition to this low carbon economy will have an impact on some workers and communities who are dependent upon carbon based industry for employment. In order to ensure a Just Transition for these workers and communities government action is required to develop alternative industries and employment.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign for greater awareness amongst UNISON members of the threat posed by climate change;
- 2) Demand government action to meet the targets for reducing global warming and to develop alternative employment for carbon industry workers;
- 3) Campaign for divestment from fossil fuel extraction for pension funds;
- 4) Seek alliances amongst other trade unions who share our objectives.

*South Lanarkshire*

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96.1

In point 3) add at end:

" , whilst respecting the fiduciary duty of pension fund trustees;"

Add new point 5):

“5) work with UNISON energy service group.”

*National Executive Council*

96.2

Add new bullet point 5):

“5) To campaign to oppose fracking.”

*City of Glasgow*

## Health

### 97. NHS Car Parking Costs

The exorbitant cost of car parking at hospitals and GP’s surgeries is putting an increasing financial burden on patients and carers especially women who are the main carers for elderly family and children attending GP surgeries and hospital for routine and regular appointments. For more serious ailments and long term stays in hospital, the cost become so expensive that it starts to place additional pressures on women and families.

In December 2015, the BBC found that hospitals were making millions of pounds every year from car parking charges and that most hospitals charge for disabled parking. These costs are also higher or lower depending where you live. The cost to carers living in the South East of England will usually be higher costs than most other regions (but not all). Hospital car parking charges in Scotland and Wales were abolished in 2008 but not in England. Although car parking charges still exist in Northern Ireland, patients receiving radiotherapy or chemotherapy treatment, patients receiving renal dialysis and next of kin visiting patients in critical care or a high dependency unit are eligible for free car parking.

Charities such as MacMillan Cancer and groups such as the Patients Association have said that hospital car parking charges are morally wrong especially for disabled patients and patients who have to attend hospital for life saving treatment, for example radiotherapy. The Patients Association also state that the claim from hospitals that car parking revenue is reinvested back into patient care and front line services is simply not true.

The economic value of the contributions made by carers in the UK is £132 billion a year. The majority of carers are women who are fed up with the government making money from their unpaid labour and even more angry that they actually have to pay (via charges such as hospital car park costs) to carry out that caring role. Conference believes that NHS England can do more to ensure that patients, especially the disabled and women carers are not

made to pay what amounts to a financial penalty.

Conference believes that the Government should take action to limit this financial burden on patients and carers. Conference calls on the National Executive Council to work with Labour Link, National Self-Organised Groups, Young Members and other committees and department and external agencies as necessary to develop a national campaign and lobby government for a review and cessation of car parking charges at hospitals in England and asking the government to:

- 1) Seek to abolish all car parking charges in hospitals in England as has been achieved in both Scotland and Wales;
- 2) Seek, as a minimum, to move to a model similar to that in Northern Ireland whereby car parking charges are kept at a minimum and which are free to patients attending hospital for life saving treatment and for next of kin and family visitors.

*Isle of Wight  
Waverley*

## Education

### 98. A new deal for LEAs

Conference agrees that the government’s academies and free schools programme:

- 1) Redirects hundreds of millions of pounds that could be better spent on existing schools;
- 2) Weakens local authorities;
- 3) Undermines national pay and conditions for employees;
- 4) Breaks up admission arrangements;
- 5) Harms the democratic planning of school places;
- 6) Is unpopular with parents and the public in general to the point where the Government has already rowed back from it’s recent position of forcing all schools to become Academies by 2022.

Conference believes that:

- a) There is no justification for passing publicly funded education to private companies who could profit from it;
- b) This undemocratic process removes the voice of communities, local government and parents – replacing them with unelected Regional Schools Commissioners and unelected, highly paid, multi academy trust chief executives;
- c) There is little evidence that academies and free schools improve achievement but they do encourage the exclusion of underprivileged children;
- d) This is happening when schools are facing serious funding difficulties and both academies and grammar schools are making redundancies.

Conference therefore agrees to:

- i) Call on the Labour party to create a policy to bring all state funded schools under some form of local authority control;
- ii) Call on the Government to put in place a framework around the current policy that restores an appropriate level of oversight and influence to local education authorities;
- iii) Call on local authorities to express support for one or other of these demands and to offer an alternative to independent multi-academy trusts to school governors so they do not feel obliged transfer in the mean time.

*Plymouth in UNISON*

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98.1

Delete point c) and replace with:

“c) Whilst some academies and free schools improve achievement, the majority do no better or are much worse than equivalent maintained schools and far too many academies and free schools have lower intakes of disadvantaged children and young people;”

Delete iii) and replace with:

“iii) Call on local authorities to express support for these demands and offer high quality support services to their own maintained schools so that school governors do not feel pressured to support the conversion of their school to an academy.”

*National Executive Council*

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## 99. Higher Education as a Public Service

Conference notes:

- 1) Since the introduction of tuition fees, the idea of higher education as a public service, available to all based on educational merit, has been ruthlessly attacked. Fees are now generally in excess of £9,000 and universities are forced to develop marketing strategies to compete for students, who are seen as customers buying degrees as a product;
- 2) Introducing competition into higher education has been and continues to be a disaster for students, education workers and all working people, irrespective of their involvement in university life. Whilst many public services delivered by local authorities and the NHS are being relentlessly starved of funds, the elaborate system of student loans for fees is a con trick designed to fiddle the national debt and ultimately extract profits from future generations of graduates, as if young people do not have enough to worry about;
- 3) The speed of change is forcing vice-chancellors to turn their institutions into businesses, with the

inevitable impact on jobs, terms and conditions of our members. Unprofitable courses are cut and campuses are closed, whilst students are crammed into sub-standard classrooms and ripped off by private landlords, or unaffordable university halls;

- 4) The trade union movement has a responsibility to defend higher education as a public service and the workers providing and supporting it;
- 5) To return higher education to a service free to all, fully funded from taxation, and to write off all loans would cost billions. However, this is entirely possible given the colossal wealth which exists in the hands of the rich and the billions wasted on armaments etc.;
- 6) A clear call for free education, combined with an end to fees and effective taxation of the rich, will gain a major echo from millions of working people looking for an alternative to cuts and privatisation. Conference Calls on the National Executive Council to:
  - a) Be loud and clear in campaigning for free and properly funded education at all levels;
  - b) Identify and implement a strategy to make free education a major theme of UNISON's political campaigning.

*University of Brighton*

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## Social Policy

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### 100. Abortion Rights (50th Anniversary of the 1967 Act)

Conference notes that the 1967 Abortion Act will be 50 years old in 2017.

Prior to 1967 around 100,000 illegal abortions were carried out each year in Britain and it is estimated that 35,000 women were hospitalised each year due to botched back street abortions. No one really knows how many women actually died, but one estimate is that 15% of all maternal deaths were a result of botched backstreet abortions.

The 1967 Abortion Act gave women limited access to safe abortions, but that right has had to be defended many times since 1967 and our Trade Union movement has always been central to that defence. We recognised abortion is a class issue. Rich women always have the money to access safe abortions; it was largely working class women who died in the back streets and who suffer disproportionately when abortion is restricted.

Conference further notes that the 1967 Abortion Act does not extend to Northern Ireland and that a woman was recently sentenced to prison (sentence suspended) for using the abortion pill purchased over the internet due to non-availability in Northern Ireland.

Women in Poland took to the streets in huge

numbers to prevent the total banning of abortion in their country organising a 'women's strike' that tens of thousands took part in.

The fight for a women's right to choose is a global fight.

Conference further notes that the Abortions Rights Campaign UK will be actively celebrating the 50th anniversary and using the event to raise the profile of the abortion rights movement and campaign to extend the right to abortion beyond the 1967 Act.

Conference calls on all relevant national bodies to encourage our members in branches across the union to hold events to promote the 50th anniversary and to raise the profile of the Abortion Rights Campaign in UK in any way that they can to this end.

*Greater London*

## Efficient and Effective Union

### Branch Funding

#### 101. Branch funding

Conference notes that UNISON's branches are of ever-increasing importance in the provision of support for members. The reduction of employers in national bargaining arrangements and the fragmentation of the workforce point to this trend.

Since 2010, the large increase in collective reorganisations at the local level due to cuts in central government expenditure and outsourcing, and the increase in resultant individual casework, have all shifted the workload further onto our branches. Facility time of lay activists has come under attack since 2010, placing further strain on activists within branches, particularly in terms of representing and organising members outside core employers.

Conference also notes the continuing need for branches to campaign for their members, particularly as cuts continue apace under the current Tory government.

However, Conference notes that despite all these changes to the terrain in which the union operates, UNISON has not sufficiently changed its branch retention formula to meet these challenges.

Conference also notes that Motion 121 passed at National Delegate Conference 2016 has been implemented by the National Executive Council with limits placed on the additional activity-based funding that branches can receive.

Conference notes that our union recorded a surplus of around £10million in the 2015 accounts, and holds

reserves of over £200million. Nevertheless, Conference fully accepts that our trade union must live within its means.

Therefore a review must be undertaken to prioritise activity and expenditure at the union's regional and national tiers in order to free up sufficient funds as are necessary to support branches in their critical and growing work, the success or failure of which will determine the future of our union.

There remains in UNISON a fundamental mismatch of where the union's resources are and where they need to be. Therefore Conference calls for all appropriate national committees to put into place:

- 1) A new scheme of funding to be in operation by 1st January 2018, based on the following principles:
  - a) Any branch with more than £16 per full member in general reserves at the annual point of calculation will not qualify for additional funding;
  - b) All other branches will receive an increase in the standard entitlement of total annual subscription income from 20.0% to 25.0%;
  - c) If a branch is under the recommended notional reserve of £16 per member, and an increase in the standard entitlement would take the branch above £16 per member, that branch will only receive that portion of the increase in the standard entitlement which would take them up to £16 per member;
  - d) All additional percentage enhancements for branches will remain unchanged;
  - e) This will result in the fixed proportion of total annual subscription income allocated to branch funding increasing from 23.5% to no more than 28.5%, and the fixed proportion of total annual subscription income allocated to the regions and national office decreasing from 76.5% to no less than 71.5%;
  - f) A review of options for significant further devolvement of resources to branches.
- 2) A review of activity and expenditure at the union's regional and national tiers, to be commenced during the remainder of 2017 so as to prioritise union activity and expenditure at regional and national tiers with a view to reducing or ceasing expenditure that may no longer be affordable.

*Manchester*

#### 102. Branch Funding

Conference notes that UNISON's branches are of ever-increasing importance in the provision of support for members. The reduction of employers in national bargaining arrangements and the fragmentation of the workforce point to this trend.

Since 2010, the large increase in collective reorganisations at the local level due to cuts in central government expenditure and outsourcing, and the

increase in resultant individual casework, have all shifted the workload further onto our branches. Facility time of lay activists has come under attack since 2010, placing further strain on activists within branches.

Conference also notes the continuing need for branches to campaign for their members, particularly as cuts continue apace under the current Tory government.

However, Conference notes that despite all these changes to the terrain in which the union operates, UNISON has not changed its branch retention formula to bring the union up-to-date to meet these challenges.

Conference also notes that Motion 121 passed at National Delegate Conference 2016 has been implemented by the National Executive Council with strict limits placed on the additional activity-based funding that branches can receive.

Conference notes that our union recorded a surplus of around £10 million in the 2015 accounts, and holds reserves of over £200 million. Nevertheless, Conference fully accepts that our trade union must live within its means.

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- 1) A new scheme of funding to be in operation by 1st January 2018, based on the following principles:
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  - b) All other branches will receive an increase in the standard entitlement of total annual subscription income from 20.0% to 25.0%;
  - c) If a branch is just under the recommended notional reserve of £16 per member, and an increase in the standard entitlement would take the branch above £16 per member, that branch will only receive that portion of the increase in the standard entitlement which would take them up to £16 per member;
  - d) All additional percentage enhancements for branches will remain unchanged;
  - e) This will result in the fixed proportion of total annual subscription income allocated to branch funding increasing from 23.5% to no more than 28.5%, and the fixed proportion of total annual subscription income allocated to the regions and national office decreasing from 76.5% to no less than 71.5%;
  - f) That over time there will be significant further devolvement of resources to branches.

- 2) A review of activity and expenditure at the union's regional and national tiers, to be commenced during the remainder of 2017 so as to prioritise union activity and expenditure at regional and national tiers with a view to reducing or ceasing expenditure that may no longer be affordable.

*Barnet  
Lambeth  
Salford City  
West Sussex*

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### 103. Activity-Based Budgeting

Conference welcomes Motion 121 passed at National Delegate Conference 2016.

It notes that Motion 121 was intended to introduce a new process of activity-based budgeting, which would meet branch needs by facilitating funding for the activity required for branches to be successful in meeting the union's objectives.

Motion 121 acknowledged the vital role branches play in supporting members and affirmed the union's commitment to the retention formula. Motion 121 sought through activity-based budgeting to build on the retention formula, the bedrock of branch funding, whilst taking into account that the retention formula does not provide a growing number of branches with the resources they require to meet the complex and ever-growing needs of members.

Conference supports that approach.

However, Conference also notes that activity-based budgeting has not yet been implemented in a way consistent with Motion 121 passed at National Delegate Conference 2016.

Conference notes delays in the provision of training.

Conference also notes that the system of activity-based budgeting has not been rolled out in time for the start of the UNISON financial year.

Conference further notes the lack of clarity about both the budgeting process and the funding it will release for branches.

Since Motion 121 was passed, UNISON has sought to introduce an entirely new formulation for activity-based budget 'top-ups', not provided for within the content of Motion 121. The effect of this, if put into practice, will be to negate the principles of activity-based budgeting and to only provide a fraction of the funding some branches have budgeted for to meet the objectives of the union in 2017.

Conference believes these recent developments in activity-based budgeting are unwelcome and will not strengthen branches in the ways anticipated.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to ensure that Motion 121 is implemented as passed by National Delegate Conference 2016.

*Salford City*

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#### **104. Activity Based Budgeting and the Regional Pool Structure**

Conference notes that part i) of motion 121, "Gateway to the Future: Stable and Sustainable Branch Resources", which was passed at National Delegate Conference 2016 states:

"During 2016, in consultation with regions, the regional pool structure and criteria will be revised to facilitate increased funding for branches whose reserves are insufficient to fund their activity-based budget work plan."

Conference notes that by the end of 2016, no consultation has taken place with all regions in respect of the regional pool.

Conference notes that as at 20 February 2017 the "Regional Pool UNISON Guidelines" have not been updated.

Conference understands the importance of the Regional Pool fund and the excellent achievements that have come from successful bids in developing the aims and objectives of UNISON at a regional level.

Conference is concerned that without full consultation with regions, clear guidance and a revised criteria for the regional pool structure will not reflect the needs of branches and regions who have a working knowledge of the effectiveness of regional pool funding.

The regional pool funding criteria has not been amended to reflect the increased draw on it from the activity based budgeting activities that it now has to pay for, in addition to the other regional activities as agreed within each region.

Conference is concerned that activity-based budgeting may use the entire regional pool funding and this was not an agreed outcome of the successful motion in 2016.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Carry out an in depth and transparent consultation with all regions in respect of the current regional pool structure and criteria;
- 2) Commit to providing increased funding to the regional pool to facilitate all uplifts required by branches through activity based budgeting.

*Broadland*

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#### **105. Activity Based Budgeting and the Regional Pool Structure**

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Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Commit to providing increased funding to the regional pool to facilitate all uplifts required by branches through activity based budgeting;
- 2) Carry out an in depth and transparent consultation with regions in respect of the current regional pool structure and criteria.

*Broadland*

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### **Resources**

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#### **106. Shared Branch Resource Centres**

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

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

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

Conference congratulates those who have already committed time, effort and financial resources to establishing locally based shop front centres that are accessible to members and potential members as

well as activists and staff. These centres will provide a range of administrative and representational services to branches and members, freeing up activists to use their increasingly limited and precious time to organise within our membership and potential membership to build a strong and effective union.

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

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

- 1) As a matter of priority, a branch guide to establishing shared branch resources is produced and issued. The guide should contain advice on managing such projects, finding and procuring appropriate premises, financial planning and joint financial accountability;
- 2) Consideration is given, within the Branch Resources Review, to the development of an appropriate funding formula that includes the UK, regional and branch contributions to sustainable shared resources;
- 3) UNISON publications are used to regularly showcase the positive work of the shared branch resources.

*Eastern*

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106.1

Insert in point 1) after “a branch guide” the following: “, including a financial and governance framework, “

In point 2) delete all words after “the development of” and replace with “appropriate and sustainable mechanisms for sharing resources amongst branches and regions;”

*National Executive Council*

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## Member Services

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### 107. Advice on in work benefits

Conference recognises that for many members low pay means that they have to rely on benefits and tax credits in order to make up their income. Some will also be able to claim allowances due to caring responsibilities and disabilities. As a union our responsibility is to organise campaigns in support of higher pay for our members so that they do not need to rely on these benefits.

However, the reality is that members will continue to be able to and need to claim. It is recognised that some members who could claim do not and are therefore missing out on additional income that could improve their personal financial circumstances and lift them out of poverty.

Members, when off sick, may have to claim

Statutory Sick Pay and other benefits. During and after pregnancy they will be able to claim Maternity Pay or Maternity Allowance.

Currently UNISON does not regularly provide information to members on the benefit system and encourage members to claim what is their entitlement. Neither does UNISON provide any training to raise the awareness of stewards on these issues so that they can highlight these to members.

Conference recognises that stewards are not welfare rights advisers. However they could be better informed and therefore better able to point members towards claiming the benefits, credits and allowances that they may be entitled to and direct them to appropriate professional advice.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) In conjunction with “There For You”, commission a pilot training course for stewards on in work benefits to raise awareness of these and to enable stewards to signpost members to these benefits;
- 2) Produce literature on these benefits for circulation to members;
- 3) Publicise these benefits and encourage members to claim what they are entitled to, using UNISON literature and working with “There For You”;
- 4) Evaluate the effectiveness of these actions and report to a future conference on how best to take this issue forward.

*South Lanarkshire*

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107.1

Add new fifth paragraph:

“Conference is aware that UNISON There for you piloted an ‘Introduction to Benefits’ training session at their seminar in 2016. Following the success of this they have commissioned two training courses for July and September 2017 which will be open to branch welfare officers.”

In point 1) delete “commission a pilot training course for stewards on in work benefits to raise awareness of these and to enable stewards to signpost members to these benefits;” and replace with “evaluate the effectiveness and relevance to stewards of the ‘Introduction to Benefits’ course that has been commissioned by There for you and run for branch welfare officers in 2017 to include how this might be adapted for steward training purposes;”

In point 2) delete “literature” and replace with “information” and delete all after ‘benefits’ and replace with “including details of where to signpost members for expert help and advice on the website;”

In point 3) delete “Publicise these” and insert “Working with UNISON There For You, promote take up of these” and delete all text after ‘entitled to’.

*National Executive Council*

## 108. Private Insurance

UNISON has been a long standing supporter of the NHS not only because of our members who work in the sector but also because of what the NHS represents. The most talented and dedicated people work in the NHS and provide the best care a patient can receive. However the current political debates are increasingly focused entirely on cost which violates the rights of patients.

The Tory policies based on austerity have denied the NHS proper funding and pushed it into a state of crisis which has led to such a shortage of health care that it is now rationed. Waiting lists getting longer routinely deprive patients of crucial, irreplaceable time, and this burden falls hardest on the sickest patients, those with the least time to spare. In some cases, it can cost them their very lives.

Conference believes firmly in UNISON's long held commitment to campaigning to defend our NHS and the rights of patients. To agree a partnership with AIG Europe to offer private health insurance cover for members seems a contradiction of these long held values. The most recent offer to member in this respect is the private health insurance which has been offered as a 'benefit' to women members should they be affected by one of seven cancers with a policy available to women between the ages of 18-69. Conference feels that this is morally wrong; affordable health care is not a commodity in a caring society which we claim to be – it is a moral imperative.

Health insurance premiums, in an insurance-as-commodity model, cannot be priced affordably. The odds are very high (approaching 100%) that each insured member will have to make a claim, at some point. Therefore, the insurance issuer cannot make a profit unless the premium is high enough to cover all the costs, or if restrictions are applied to reduce the odds that insured members will have to make claims. A combination of the age at which most women are most at risk of developing cancer and the increased costs to the premium as women get older puts this private health insurance financially out of the reach to a large section of our women members especially those who are low paid.

Breast Cancer – the lifetime risk of a woman developing breast cancer is one in eight. The majority of breast cancers (81%) occur in women over the age of 50.

Ovarian Cancer – half of all ovarian cancers are found in women 63 years of age or older.

Cervical Cancer – most likely to affect women aged 25-34, however 20 per cent of new diagnoses and nearly 50 per cent of cervical cancer deaths occur in women over the age of 64.

Uterine Cancer – most often occurs in women over 50; the average age is 60

Vaginal Cancer – occurs most often in women between 50 and 70 years old; approximately half of women with vaginal cancer are older than 60.

Vulva Cancer – most women diagnosed with vulvar

cancer are older than 50. However, about 15% of women who develop vulvar cancer are younger than 40.

Fallopian Tube Cancer – affects women from ages 18-88, with the most common occurrence being between 40 and 65 years old.

The insurance that UNISON is supporting has an incremental cost linked to the age of the woman. So for a woman of 50 the monthly cost would be £33.50 (£402 per year) and by the age of 60 it would rise to £44.55 (£535 per year), yet evidence pointed out above demonstrates more older women are likely to be affected by cancer, therefore unlikely to benefit from this insurance policy because private insurance companies tend to design policies with the aim of attracting people with lower-than-average health risks and exclude those with higher health risks and this then leads to discrimination and the exclusion of older women.

Additionally, many of our women members are in low paid jobs, zero hours contracts, and more public sector workers anxious about the shrinking of the services they provide which puts their employment at risk, should we really be asking women to buy into an insurance policy that is unaffordable for many of them, when it is an added expense many can't afford. More women work part-time than men which often comes at the expense of low wages, leaving too many women piling debts. By promoting private health insurance UNISON is creating a divide between those who can afford it and those who can't.

Although private health insurance can increase financial protection to those able to pay, high premiums mean that few women can afford to join, and it cannot benefit therefore more than a limited group of women. Paying for additional health insurance is one thing; paying premiums month after month to keep it is another, a dip in income or unexpected expenses can make that recurring bill unmanageable, and losing coverage is a possibility.

Conference believes that UNISON must demonstrate its commitment to protecting equal access to health and effective preventative care for everyone.

Therefore Conference asks the National Executive Council to work with relevant departments and external agencies to:

- 1) Develop policy for future UNISON Living benefits for members which do not contradict the values and principles of our public service union;
- 2) Review the uptake by women members as an indication of the viability and requirement for future offers in this field;
- 3) Do not actively promote it as a UNISON Living benefit to women members.

*Southampton*

## Motions readmitted to the agenda

### 109. Ban the Box

Ban the Box calls on UK employers to create a fair opportunity for ex-offenders to compete for jobs by removing the tick box from application forms and asking about criminal convictions later in the recruitment process.

Research suggests that three-quarters of employers discriminate against applicants who have a criminal conviction. But when employers Ban the Box, they allow the candidate's skills and abilities to shine through.

Conference notes that a trade union should aim to eliminate all discriminatory barring mechanisms to gaining meaningful employment.

Major International companies such as Boots, Barclays and even the Civil Service have "Banned the Box".

To give you some context as to what Ban the Box is, it is important to hear why major companies are supporting Ban the Box.

Boots UK said "This is not a simple issue. People end up offending for a variety of complex reasons and as employers the most powerful thing we can do is to help create a second chance for offenders so that it is possible for people with criminal convictions to enter employment and get back on track."

Marco Pagni, Group Legal Counsel and Chief Administrative Officer, Walgreen Boots Alliance.

Barclay's Ban the Box is a common sense way to ensure that businesses don't make assumptions about prospective employees before learning the facts, whilst still ensuring that appropriate questions are asked through the process. We wouldn't have found some of our best apprentices if we hadn't made this change ourselves. That is why Barclays is backing this important programme in partnership with Business in the Community." Matt Hammerstein, Head of Client and Customer Experience.

Conference calls on all branches to campaign for employers to adopt a position of supporting Ban the Box.

*Nottingham City*

## EXISTING RULE

### Rule C Membership

#### 5. Becoming a member

- 5.1 Every person wishing to become a member shall complete and sign a prescribed form of application for membership, using her or his full name and giving her or his address, and shall return it either to the branch secretary of the appropriate branch or to the office specified on the form.

### Rule D Structure of the Union at National Level

#### 2. National executive council

- 2.1 Functions and authority  
The general management and control of the Union between National Delegate Conferences shall be vested in the National Executive Council, which shall comprise representatives elected from the Regions and Service Groups plus four national black members' seats, a young members' seat and two disabled members' seats. It shall have full power and authority to act on behalf of the Union in every respect and for every purpose falling within the objects of the Union. It shall not do anything that is inconsistent with these Rules or the policy of the Union as laid down by the National Delegate Conference.
- 2.5 Young members' seat  
There will be an additional representative for young members elected from a national constituency of young members in all regions. No member shall be a candidate for election to the young members' seat unless she/he:
- .1 will be aged 26 or under when the period of office ends as set out at Rule D.2.7.1
  - .2 has received two nominations from any branches, or regional young members' forums or National Young Members' Forum.

## AMENDMENTS TO RULE

### Rule C Membership

#### 1. Rule C Becoming a Member

- C 5.1 Insert "or by using the prescribed on-line system for joining" after "sign a prescribed form of application for membership"  
At the end of C 5.1 add "Membership shall commence on the date details of membership are entered into the membership records system."  
*National Executive Council*

### Rule D Structure of the Union at National Level

#### 2. Rule D Structure of the Union at National Level

- D 2.1 Replace "a young members' seat" with "two young members' seats"
- D 2.5 Amend title – replace "seat" with "seats"  
In first paragraph: replace "representative" with "two representatives, at least one of whom must be a woman"  
In second paragraph: Replace "seat" with "seats"
- D 6.2 Replace "member elected to the young members' seat" with "members elected to the young members' seats"  
*National Young Members' Forum*

## EXISTING RULE

## AMENDMENTS TO RULE

### 6. Young members' organisation

- 6.1 A Regional Young Members' Forum shall be created, consisting of representatives from branch level.
- .1 A Regional Young Members' Forum may formulate proposals, motions or other proposals to the appropriate Regional Council or Regional Committee.
  - .2 A Regional Young Members' Forum shall be represented on the appropriate Regional Committee by a representative with full voting rights.
  - .3 A Regional Young Members' Forum shall be eligible to send delegates to the appropriate Regional Council, or as otherwise determined by the National Executive Council.
  - .4 A report on the Regional Young Members' Forum's activities shall be made to the annual meeting of the appropriate Regional Council.
  - .5 The Regional Council shall give their Regional Young Members' Forum financial support within the Union's guidelines.
- 6.2 A National Young Members' Forum shall be established consisting of up to two representatives per region and the member elected to the young members' seat on the National Executive Council.
- .1 The National Young Members' Forum may send motions or proposals to the National Executive Council
  - .2 The National Young Members' Forum may, subject to the Union's rules, send up to two delegates and two motions to the National Delegate Conference, each National Service Group Conference and each Self Organised Group's Conference.
  - .3 The activities of the National Young Members' Forum will be reported to the NEC.
  - .4 The National Executive Council shall give the National Young Members' Forum financial support within the union's guidelines.

## EXISTING RULE

### Rule M Financial and Legal

#### 6 Data protection act policy

- 6.1 No branch, or any member thereof, may use any automatic data processing equipment for a purpose connected with the administration of the branch or any section of it, unless the Branch Secretary has notified the General Secretary that the branch or any of its members are so using such equipment, the purpose for which it is being used, and the nature of the information recorded.
- 6.2 For the avoidance of doubt, each branch and its members must abide by the data protection principles embodied in the Data Protection Act 1998 so far as these principles apply to activities undertaken by them on behalf of the branch or a section of it.
- 6.3 Upon receiving a written request for such information from the General Secretary, a branch and any of its members must supply such information as is reasonably practicable to facilitate the registration of the Union under the Data Protection Act and the compliance by the Union with the data protection principles.
- 6.4 A member seeking to enforce her/his rights under the Data Protection Act must apply to the General Secretary.

## AMENDMENTS TO RULE

### Rule M Financial and Legal

#### 3. Rule M Data Protection Act policy

- M 6 Delete existing title and replace with "M6 Data protection"
- In M 6.2 insert "and requirements" after "data protection principles"
- Delete existing M 6.4 and replace with:  
"6.4 a member seeking to enforce his/her rights should address them to the Data Protection Officer. Any such requests that are received by a branch or union official should be forwarded to the Data Protection Officer immediately."
- Add new M 6.5:  
"6.5 From 25 May 2018 all references to the Data Protection Act 1998 refer to the General Data Protection Regulation 2016."

*National Executive Council*

## 4. Guide to Conference Procedures

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### 4.1 Role of the Standing Orders Committee

The composition of the Standing Orders Committee ensures that it is a completely impartial body, responsible only to Conference. The Committee is responsible for the preparation of the Final Agenda for Conference, determining the Order of Business, considering whether emergency motions should be put to Conference.

The Standing Orders Committee meets throughout Conference. This is where you should go if you want to raise an issue concerning the business of Conference. The meetings of the Standing Orders Committee will take place in Room 5 at the Brighton Centre.

If you require induction loop, speech to text and/ or sign language interpretation facilities when visiting the Standing Orders Committee, please notify one of the stewards outside the Standing Orders Committee room, so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

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### 4.2 Role of Chairperson

The Chairperson chairs meetings of the Standing Orders Committee ensuring clear decisions are reached and that a fair hearing is given to all branches and delegates coming before the Committee.

The Chairperson delivers regular reports from the Standing Orders Committee to Conference. These reports include such items as the proposed Order of Business, withdrawals and emergency motions.

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### 4.3 Role of Secretary

The Secretary ensures that all relevant information is brought before the Standing Orders Committee within the deadlines required, advises the Committee on constitutional matters and provides support and advice to the Chairperson.

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### 4.4 Role of the President

The president of the union presides over conference and chairs all the debates. The two vice-presidents may deputise for the president. Given the special circumstances of the 2017 conferences, at the request of

the vice presidents, former presidents may be asked to preside over conference sessions.

With the co-operation of delegates, conference business is processed quickly and without great formality. There are occasions, however, when the president will need to exercise their authority including the right to make a ruling on a question of standing orders or a point of order. The president's ruling is final.

The president also has the authority to take action in respect of any delegate in response to any behaviour which is deemed to be inappropriate or unacceptable (for example causing a disturbance and refusing to obey the call to order, interrupting a speaker, engaging in behaviour which is insulting or otherwise disrespectful either at the conference, or at any official event connecting with conference or on social media. The president may delegate the exercise of this authority. This authority includes issuing the delegate with an informal warning, preventing them from speaking in any debate or motion, a temporary removal of credentials for all or part of the conference, or otherwise expulsion from conference. Where appropriate, consultation and discussions will take place with the relevant regional delegates. Such behaviour may also be dealt with under the union's disciplinary procedures.

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### 4.5 Role of the National Executive Council and National Officers

National Executive Council members sit on the platform together with the General Secretary and Assistant General Secretaries. They are called on to move reports, statements, motions, amendments to rule and any amendments in the name of the National Executive Council. They will also speak for the National Executive Council in reply to some of the debates.

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### 4.6 The Business of Conference

At the start of Conference the first Standing Orders Committee Report set out in Section 1 will be moved and voted on. That will decide the timetable for Conference. You will see the proposed timetable laid out in Section 2 of this Conference Guide.

The proposed Order of Business will be contained in Standing Orders Committee Report Number 2.

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## 4.7 How Debates are Conducted

The following explains how a motion without amendments is debated:

- 1) The mover speaks to the motion.
- 2) Speakers are taken against and for the motion.
- 3) After all the speakers are finished or after a successful move to close the debate, either by someone moving the question be put, or moving next business, or on the advice of the Chair, the mover of the motion has the right of reply.

### 4) Vote.

The following explains how a motion with amendments is debated:

- 1) The mover of the motion is called to speak.
- 2) The mover of the first amendment is called to speak. An amendment must be formally moved, even if it is accepted by the mover of the motion.
- 3) Then speakers are called against and for the amendment.
- 4) After there are no more speakers or a successful move to close debate, the mover of the motion may take the right of reply.
- 5) Vote on amendment.
- 6) If there is another amendment points 2-5 are repeated.
- 7) Once all amendments have been voted on there is the opportunity for a debate on the main (or substantive) motion. There is then the final opportunity for the right of reply to be used, if it has not been taken before.
- 8) Vote on main (substantive) motion.

The right of reply lies with the branch which moves the original motion in all debates. The branch may use the right of reply before the vote on any amendment or before the final vote.

For grouped debates, the following procedure applies:

- 1) All motions and amendments are moved in order.
- 2) General debate, for and against anything in any motion or amendment.
- 3) All movers of motions have a right of reply, taken in the same order as motions were moved.
- 4) Vote in order in which motions were moved, with amendments taken first.

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## 4.8 If you want to speak

We want to encourage as many people as possible to speak in debates at Conference. You need to look at your Order of Business to find out what motions are due to be debated each day. (This is distributed at Conference with the daily Standing Orders Committee report.)

As there are often a lot of people who want to speak it is best if you read the motions and decide in advance which you might like to speak on. You should then talk to

one of your regional representatives who sit near the back of the conference hall. They should be able to tell you whether there are likely to be a lot of people wanting to speak in the same debate.

The rostrum control staff at the front of the hall can also give advice. There are reserved seats at the front of the hall for people waiting to speak so that it is easy for the President, who chairs Conference, to call speakers in the right order and ensure there is a balanced debate.

In some cases we know there will be a lot of speakers because the motion is about a major issue for the union. There are also some motions that have a lot of amendments, composite motions and grouped debates that can be confusing if the seating order for speakers is not arranged properly. In these circumstances it is helpful for the rostrum control staff to know in advance who would like to speak so that Conference can run smoothly. Rostrum control staff keep a list for popular or difficult debates likely to be heard during the day. Regional representatives are told which debates these are and any delegate wishing to speak in a debate coming up during the day, or big debates first thing the next day should talk to their regional representative or the rostrum control staff.

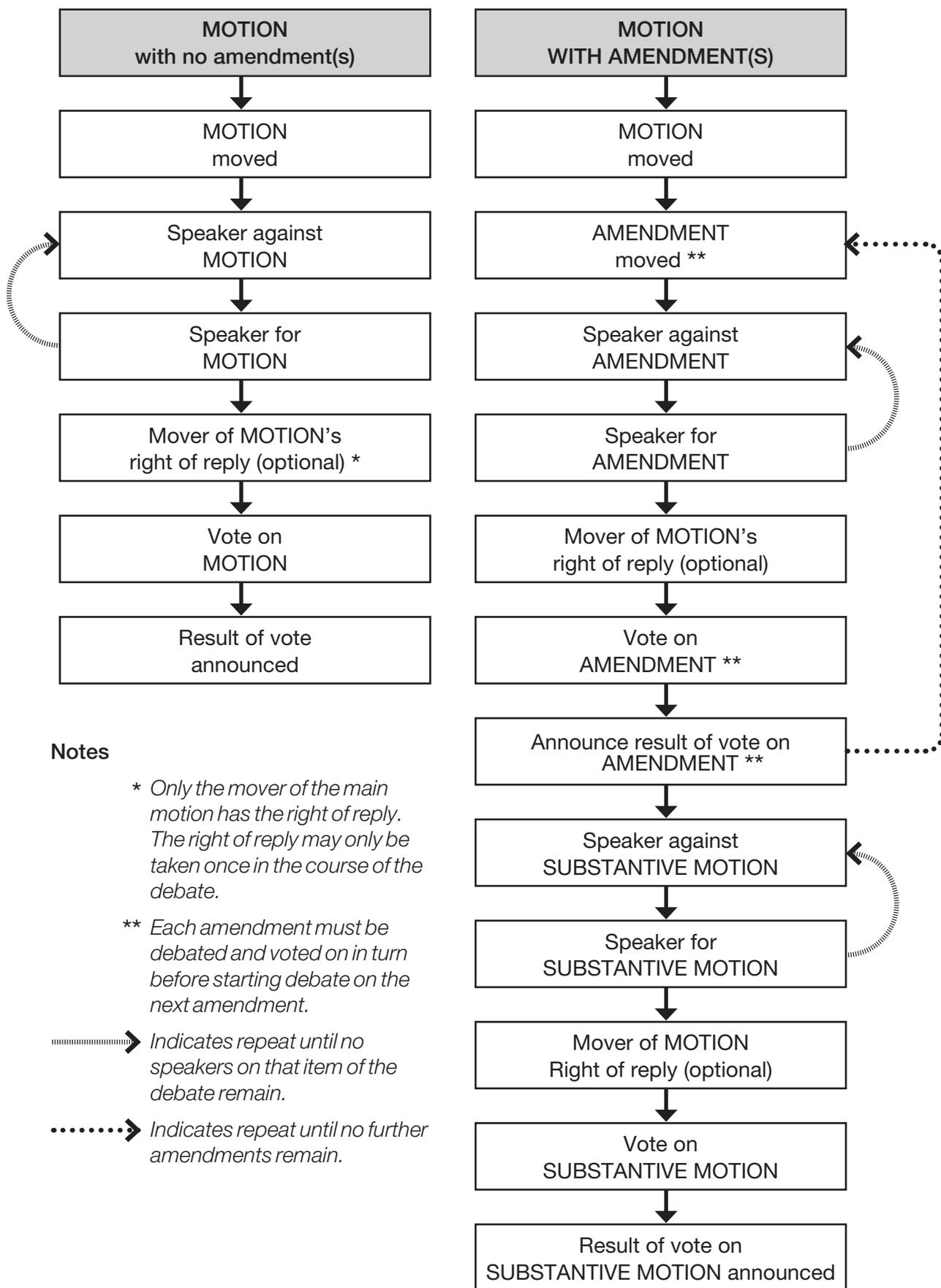
This system prevents delays caused by trying to sort out who should sit where in the speaking order when there are lots of people wanting to speak. It also prevents delegates having to race for seats which is both dangerous and discriminatory.

We know that at times you will only decide you want to speak when you have heard what someone else has said. In this case just get to the front as soon as you can and someone will show you where to sit.

In all cases you may find that having worked yourself up to speak you may not get the chance as the debate is closed before your turn. This is very frustrating but inevitable with the number of important motions we are trying to debate in a very busy week. However don't be put off – have a go, we want to hear what you have to say.

Remember

- If you are moving a motion or speaking in the debate, then please come to the front of the hall in good time so you are ready. A row of seats is kept free for this purpose. Seats are reserved for those wishing to speak 'for' or 'against' the motion. A seat is also reserved for the delegate with the right of reply.
- There is no specific provision for a seconder.
- When you go to the front of the hall to speak, show your credential card to rostrum control.
- When you speak remember to give your name and branch, say which motion you are speaking about, and whether you are moving, supporting or opposing it.
- When the yellow light comes on you have one minute left. When the red light comes on you must stop.
- Racist, sexist or offensive remarks will not be tolerated.



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#### 4.9 Raising a point of order

A delegate may 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 or wishes to move a procedural motion.

Only the President can interrupt a speaker. Delegates must raise a point of order after a speaker has finished. The point of order is raised with the President, not Conference.

There is a seat at the front of the rostrum reserved for points of order and a special microphone. A green light indicates that a point of order is about to be taken.

If you wish to raise a point of order you should make your way to the point of order seat, make yourself known to the member of staff operating the lights at the rostrum control, and identify the point of order.

Delegates are reminded that they should approach the point of order microphone in an orderly manner.

The President will call you to speak.

Some points of order may be new to delegates.

A delegate may move at any time:

That the question be now put. If Conference votes in favour of the question being put, you move to a vote on the motion/amendment under debate. The right of reply may be taken if it has not been used already.

That Conference proceed to the next business. If Conference votes in favour of next business, you move to the next motion/amendment, with no opportunity for the right of reply or a vote.

That the debate be adjourned. If Conference votes in favour of adjournment, you move to the next debate without voting on the current debate. The Chair will advise on when Conference will return to the adjourned debate.

Each of these motions shall be put to the vote without discussion and no amendment is allowed, but in the case of the motion that the question be now put, the President may advise Conference not to accept the motion if she feels that the matter has not been sufficiently discussed, and if the motion is carried it will take effect only after any existing right of reply has been exercised.

No one who has already spoken in a debate may move either next business or adjournment of the debate.

A delegate may also move at any time that Conference move into private session. In this case the President may, at her discretion, permit discussion and amendment.

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#### 4.10 Remit

The National Executive Council announces its policy on motions in advance. Remit means that the National Executive Council is asking Conference not to vote on the motion, but to refer the issues raised in the motion to the National Executive Council for further clarification, elaboration or investigation.

Where the National Executive Council policy on a branch's motion is remit, the following procedure will apply:

- 1) If the branch accepts remittal, the proposal is put to Conference, for Conference to approve. If Conference rejects remittal the motion is then voted on, for and against by Conference.
- 2) If the branch does not accept remittal, Conference votes on the motion, for and against. In both cases Conference makes the final decision.

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#### 4.11 Withdrawing motions/amendments

Submitting bodies wishing to withdraw a motion or amendment should notify the Standing Orders Committee. A withdrawal form is available from the Standing Orders Committee.

Where the Standing Orders Committee has to give Conference short notice of withdrawals by oral reports, the process will take the form of a two part report: first to give a factual notification; second, after a short period to allow Conference time to consider the effects of such withdrawals, to seek approval of the withdrawals.

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#### 4.12 Emergency Motions

Emergency motions will only be considered by the Standing Orders Committee if they are signed by the secretary and chairperson of the branch and provide details of the date of the branch meeting at which the motion was adopted. The subject matter giving rise to the emergency must have occurred after the deadline for motions and amendments. The Standing Orders Committee will apply strict criteria to proposed emergency motions.

**4.13 Card Votes**

- 1) All delegates with voting rights will be issued with an A4 size brightly coloured card with VOTING CARD printed on it.
- 2) Each branch has been issued with a book of voting cards.
- 3) Each card has the total voting strength for the branch printed on it which will be the total number of members in the branch.
- 4) Each card has two boxes FOR and AGAINST. Delegates must write in the total number of votes to be cast FOR and AGAINST.
- 5) A branch may:
  - i) cast all of their votes either for or against a motion.
  - ii) split the total voting strength between for and against, particularly if the branch has mandated the delegation to do so. The delegation split their vote by entering the number of votes for the motion in the FOR box and the number of votes against the motion in the AGAINST box.
- 6) In either (a) or (b) the delegation must ensure that the total of the FOR and AGAINST boxes does not exceed the total voting strength on the card. If it does exceed the total, the card will be deemed spoilt. However, the total votes cast can be less than the total voting strength, and in this case the card will be acceptable.
- 7) You must not mark the boxes with a cross or a tick.
- 8) For a voting card to be valid, in addition to the points raised in 4), 5), 6) and 7) above, a card must:
  - be signed by the delegate;
  - have the branch name entered on it;
  - be the correct card for that card vote, that is card vote 1, card 1 etc.

These points will be printed on the front cover of the book of voting cards to remind delegates.
- 9) The President will announce the arrangements for collection of the completed card vote.
- 10) Any queries about the voting cards allocated to the branch should be directed to the conference office.

**Card vote procedure**

- A) As soon as it has been decided that a card vote will be held, the President shall ring a bell. This is picked up by TV monitors.
- B) The President will ensure collectors are in their places. The vote will then be called. The President reminds delegates which card number to use and advises that numbers, not ticks or crosses, must be put in boxes.
- C) Cards will be placed in boxes controlled by members of staff. Cards may be passed along rows, except where a delegate objects to this procedure, in which case the box will be passed to her/him, provided it remains in the sight of the officer.
- D) The President shall ask delegates whether all votes have been cast. When the President is satisfied that all votes have been cast, she then rings the bell for a second time to indicate the end of the voting period. No cards will be accepted after this time. This voting period will be not less than five minutes.
- E) Boxes will be removed from the hall and taken to the appropriate place for votes to be counted under the supervision of tellers. Results will be announced as soon as possible.
- F) The doors remain open during a card vote for health and safety reasons.
- G) There is no provision for a card vote to be suspended on the grounds that voting cards have not been collected and therefore branches must ensure that their delegate(s) have collected the book of voting cards prior to the start of conference. Furthermore it is essential that a branch delegate is available to cast the branch vote at any point during all conference sessions

**You must write in the actual number of votes cast in each box. Percentages and fractions are not valid, nor are ticks or crosses**

**The number of votes cast must not exceed your total voting strength**

**The voting card must be signed by the delegate holding the voting card**

The diagram shows a rectangular voting card with the following layout:

- At the top, the text "UNISON 2017 conference" is displayed in a bold, sans-serif font.
- Below this, there are three horizontal boxes, each with a label on the left and a line ending in a dot on the right:
  - The first box is labeled "VOTES FOR".
  - The second box is labeled "VOTES AGAINST".
  - The third box is labeled "VOTING STRENGTH".
- At the bottom of the card, there is a dotted line followed by the word "SIGNED".

Four horizontal lines with arrows point from the text blocks on the left to the corresponding sections of the card: the first line points to the "VOTES FOR" box, the second to the "VOTES AGAINST" box, the third to the "VOTING STRENGTH" box, and the fourth to the "SIGNED" line.

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#### 4.14 Collections

Delegates are advised that the only official collections which take place at Conference are those which take place within the conference venue with the approval of the Standing Orders Committee. Any approved collections will be announced to Conference and organised by the chief steward.

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#### 4.15 Conduct of Delegates

All delegates, visitors, staff and facilitators are expected to behave in a courteous manner. Aggressive, offensive, intimidatory, disrespectful or unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated. This applies to all aspects of communication, at or in connection with the conference, including postings on social media. Complaints will be treated seriously.

The president has authority to take action in response to any complaint received or of their own initiative in respect of any delegate whose behaviour is deemed to be inappropriate. This authority includes issuing the delegate with an informal warning, preventing them from speaking in any debate or motion, excluding a delegate from all or part of the conference, or otherwise expulsion from conference. The exercise of the president's authority is separate from any decision to deal with the behaviour under the union's disciplinary procedures.

As trade unionists we do not expect any of these problems to arise. However, your regional secretary and regional representatives are available in the first instance for advice and support at this conference. Issues of unsatisfactory conduct by anyone attending conference can also be raised with the conference enquiry desk.

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#### 4.16 Filming, recording and photography at UNISON conferences

UNISON's conferences are a key part of our democracy. Delegates are able to make their voices heard and to vote on the policies which will govern our union's policy and campaigns.

As such, we want all our members to know about conferences and how important our democratic systems are – we believe this is an important part of being an open, democratic organisation. However, we also value the privacy of our members.

National Delegate Conference, Local Government Conference, Health Conference, National Black Members' Conference, National Women's Conference, National Disabled Members' Conference, National Lesbian Gay Bisexual & Transgender Conference are filmed throughout on behalf of UNISON. This footage provides a vital record of conference for internal use; and some footage may

be used on our website to promote UNISON and our democratic processes.

UNISON accredited photographers may be taking pictures of the main debates, fringe meetings and other public areas at all UNISON Conferences. These photographs may be used in the union's publications for members or on our website, social media sites e.g. Facebook and Twitter, to promote the union.

If you are not happy to be filmed or photographed:

- 1) In an individual circumstance i.e. the photographer is taking a picture of you specifically - request that your photograph not be taken or used.
- 2) And you are approached for a photograph or a video interview, say that you do not wish to be photographed or filmed.
- 3) And want to ensure that your image is not included in any group shot taken in the conference hall - i.e. an image of your delegation or the delegates as a whole – please speak to the Chief Steward or any of the staff in the Conference Office.
- 4) If you want to speak in a debate, but do not wish to be included in the recorded and live feed filming, please speak to rostrum control who will ensure that the filming does not include you.

If you are planning to use a camera at a conference (with or without voice recording) for the purposes of using the images and/or sound on behalf of the union, whether employed by UNISON or as an activist who may be using the image in a branch, regional or sector newsletter:

- 1) Always ask an individual for their consent.
- 2) Explain the use of the picture e.g. these images may be used by UNISON in our own publications or on our website to illustrate conference.
- 3) And it involves a large group - images of a delegation or the whole of the conference floor etc – you clearly cannot seek individual permissions. Instead, a statement will be posted at conference explaining that the event will be photographed/ filmed and individuals who object to being included in this will be told who to speak to in order to resolve their concerns.

Delegates are not permitted to make any form of recording in meetings with the Standing Orders Committee.

## 5 National Conference Rules and Standing Orders

### Rule P Standing Orders for Conferences

(see pages 54 to 59 of UNISON Rule Book as amended at the 2016 Conference)

#### **P Standing Orders for conferences**

##### **1. Application Of Standing Orders**

- 1.1 These Standing Orders shall apply to all meetings of the National Delegate Conference and Special Delegate Conference held under Rule D.1 and of the Service Group Conferences held under Rule D.3.4.
- 1.2 In the case of a Special Delegate Conference or a Service Group Conference, the appropriate Standing Orders Committee shall have power (but is not required) to decide at the request of the National Executive Council or the Service Group Executive respectively 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. The Private Contractors National

Forum, 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.

##### **2 Standing orders committee**

- 2.1 The members of the Standing Orders Committee shall hold office from the end of one National Delegate Conference until the end of the next National Delegate 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:
  - .1 ensure that the Union’s Rules and Standing Orders relating to the business of Conferences are observed, and notify the President of any violation that may be brought to the Committee’s notice
  - .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.
  - .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.

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### **3 Motions and amendments-pre-conference**

- 3.1 Procedure  
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 General 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 General Secretary shall be stated in the timetable to be published under Rule D.1.9.

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### **4-7 Conduct of conferences**

- 4.1 The National Delegate Conference shall meet in public session, except that by direction of the National Executive Council 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.1.7 have the right to attend and speak at Conference, the only persons permitted to attend a private session of a Conference shall be
  - .1 such members of the staff as have been authorised by the National Executive Council or the General Secretary to attend Conference
  - .2 such other persons as the President may determine.
- 4.2 The agenda for the National Delegate 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 National Delegate Conference under Rule D.1.7, 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 President whose ruling shall be final and binding.
- 7.1 Upon the President 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 President authorises proceedings to continue.
- 7.2 The President 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 President 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 President, she/he shall be named by the President, shall forthwith leave the Conference Hall, and shall take no further part in the proceedings of that Conference.

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### **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 President 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 President's opinion may be directly affected by that result.

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### **9 Tellers**

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

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## 10 Withdrawals 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.

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## 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 relate 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.

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## 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 President 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 President 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.

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## 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.

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## 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.

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## 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 President's ruling on the point of order is final.

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**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 President 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 President 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.

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**19 Suspension of standing orders**

- 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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**17 Reports by national executive council**

- 17.1 After the opening of Conference the National Executive Council shall present its report for the past year. The items of the report shall be discussed on a subject basis and in conjunction with any motion on the agenda which bears directly upon any part of the report.
- 17.2 If the National Executive Council 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.

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**18 Reference of outstanding items to the national executive council**

- 18.1 If at the end of the National Delegate Conference, the business of the Conference has not been concluded, all motions and amendments then outstanding shall stand referred to the National Executive Council. The National Executive Council 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.







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