

2018 National Delegate Conference

UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Brighton Centre

19 Jun 2018 22 Jun 2018

Organising and Recruitment

Organisation and Development

1. Reshaping and Resourcing Our Union

This year we celebrate 25 proud years of UNISON.

Our union has come a long way in this time. We have been innovative. We have grown. We have found new ways to represent members and speak up for public services. UNISON is seen as a world leading progressive union and a leading international and national voice on public services, equality and social justice.

We have led the way in developing new structures, new forms of democracy and self-organisation to make sure all voices are heard in UNISON-and shown that despite the challenges, our union, more than any other, is proud to represent our whole membership.

As the world around us has changed, so we have responded by adapting the way we work. Through organising, campaigning and innovation we have come through the toughest of economic times. And despite the challenge of austerity, when many wrote UNISON off, the union has remained strong, financially viable and retains a strong sense of purpose - a true testament to the efforts of our activists, members and staff.

Our ability and willingness to initiate new ways of organising and recruiting, the hiring of over 300 fighting fund organisers to support hard stretched branches, our courage in taking the hardest of employment cases and continuing to train and educate activists and stewards despite a seventy per cent cut in external funding reflects a true determination to confront these challenges and test new solutions.

However, if we are to keep succeeding as a modern progressive member led union for the next 25 years UNISON needs to continue to be bold and forward thinking.

We need to be reflective and receptive to new ideas and solutions, finding new thinking and creative proposals to tackle the challenges ahead.

In order to thrive, we have to be fit for purpose with appropriate structures, improved organisation and sufficient resources placed where they are needed not historically allocated. All resourcing must reflect the ever-changing fragmented work environment and new models of public service delivery that continue to place a huge burden on branches striving to represent every member across multiple employers. The lack of facility time, limited access to non-core employers and members in isolated and fragmented workplaces continue to add to that pressure. Any future resource allocation must also accommodate the new and growing demands placed on the national union for faster, speedier communications, more strategic large-scale litigation, more flexible, targeted training and more demanding and complex, sector based bargaining arrangements.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

The financial formula devised in 1993 and revised in 2004 was predicated on single employer branches and streamlined national bargaining arrangements, both barely recognisable today.

Fragmentation and outsourcing continues to reshape the world in which we operate, yet our financial allocations and current formula fail to reflect this.

25 years on, as the needs of branches and demands of individual members continue to change, a thorough strategic review is essential.

Changing the way we resource our branches has rightly been the topic of much debate in recent years. The debate however has failed to reach the heart of the problem, creating further tensions across branches. Tackling one area of underfunding at the expense of another will never provide the long term financial solution we need for the viability of the whole union.

If UNISON is to remain a strong and growing union, we must continue to work as one union.

A strong strategic centre that supports strong organising regions and active branches is far more viable than a federation of independent fragmented branches. We seek our strength from our unity and the resources of our union belong to us all, to be shared fairly guided by the trade union principles of solidarity and equity. As demands change those resources must be redirected to where they are needed for the benefit of all, and not to the detriment of some and directed to ensure that every member wherever they work can be represented. That is our challenge.

So as we rightly celebrate 25 years of UNISON, this milestone presents a unique opportunity to look forward. To boldly map out what type of union we need for the future, what our priorities should be and more crucially how we match our resources accordingly. The review must be inclusive, transparent and bold, examining our structures, operations and objectives.

The past quarter of a century has shown that we are at best when we work together. For those who wish to strengthen and enhance our union and build on our achievements of the past 25 years there can be no more pressing issue.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to initiate a comprehensive strategic and functional review of the union's organisation, structures and resources at branch, regional and national level.

The purpose of the review will be to ensure the most effective use of UNISON's resources to ensure all levels of our union are best placed to meet the challenges of the next 25 years.

The review will be conducted by a task force comprising key stakeholders including representatives from branches, regions, service groups, self-organised groups and the National Executive Council.

The task force will report back to UNISON National Delegate Conference with final recommendations no later than 2020 with an interim report submitted to National Delegate Conference no later than 2019.

2018 National Delegate Conference

UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

*National Executive Council
Yorkshire and Humberside Region
Broadland*

2. UNISON Shaping and resourcing our future

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However, if we are to keep succeeding as a modern progressive member led union for the next 25 years UNISON needs to continue to be bold and forward thinking. We need to be reflective and receptive to new ideas and solutions, with new thinking and creative proposals to tackle the challenges ahead.

In order to thrive, we have to be fit for purpose with appropriate structures, improved organisation and sufficient resources placed where they are needed not historically allocated. All resourcing must reflect the ever changing fragmented work environment and new models of public service delivery that continue to place a huge burden on branches striving to represent every member across multiple employers. The lack of facility time, limited access to non-core employers and members in isolated and fragmented workplaces continue to add to that pressure. Any future resource allocation must also accommodate the new and growing demands placed on the national union for faster, speedier digital communications, more strategic large scale litigation, more flexible, targeted training and more demanding and complex, sector based bargaining arrangements.

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2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Fragmentation, outsourcing and devolution continue to reshape the world in which we operate, yet our financial allocations and current formula fail to reflect this. 25 years on, as the needs of branches and demands of individual members continue to change, a thorough strategic review is essential.

Changing the way we resource our branches has rightly been the topic of much debate in recent years. The debate however has been divisive and fractious and has failed to reach the heart of the problem, creating further tensions across branches. Tackling one area of underfunding at the expense of another will never provide the long term financial solution we need for the viability of the whole union.

If UNISON is to remain a strong and growing union, we must continue to work as one union.

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So as we rightly celebrate 25 years of UNISON, this milestone presents a unique opportunity to look forward. To boldly map out what type of union we need for the future, what our priorities should be and more crucially how we match our resources accordingly. The review must be inclusive, transparent and bold, examining our structures, operations and objectives with nothing ruled out.

The past quarter of a century has shown that we are at best when we work together. For those who wish to strengthen and enhance our union and build on our achievements of the past 25 years there can be no more pressing issue.

Conference therefore instructs the National Executive Council to initiate a comprehensive strategic and functional review of the union's organisation, structures and resources at branch, regional and national level.

The purpose of the review will be to ensure the most effective use of UNISON's resources to ensure all levels of our union are best placed to meet the challenges of the next 25 years.

The review will be conducted by a task force comprising key stakeholders including representatives from branches, regions, service groups, self-organised groups and the National Executive Council.

The task force will report back to UNISON National Delegate Conference with final recommendations no later than 2020 with an interim report submitted to National Delegate Conference no later than 2019.

***West Midlands Region
Birmingham Health Care
Walsall General***

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

3. UNISON – Shaping and Resourcing Our Future

This year we celebrate 25 proud years of UNISON.

As we celebrate 25 years of UNISON, this milestone presents a unique opportunity to celebrate our success, to review our progress and achievements, and to look forward and to boldly map out what type of union we need for the future, what our priorities should be and more crucially how we match our resources accordingly.

There are demographic, political and social trends facing our trade union:

- 1) The aging demographic and medical advances place growing demands upon the public services, the models of delivery and how public services are resourced;
- 2) Post Brexit political scene merely heightens the constitutional debate in a “disunited kingdom” of growing civic nationalism and regionalisation. The unsettled will for political change, the growing plurality of politics, which will have further implications for government and governance;
- 3) In turn, these are issues of plurality and diversification for the trade union to address in policy, organisation and resourcing;
- 4) The workforce will be more diverse, increasing frequency of health issues and working lives that are disrupted with associated learning and new-skill challenges;
- 5) The more diverse models of procurement and contracting, leading to more private/not for profit/community employers to organise and service, to redefine local and sectoral bargaining;
- 6) Responding to these new models of public service delivery will have implications for working practices, ratios of organising/resource/ administration and support to branches, more home working/networking, fewer buildings, smaller estate.

These issues have implications for participation and organisation:

- a) UNISON beliefs and values are well aligned - compassion, confidence, connection, community, participation;
- b) The trend is back to joining, belonging, participating and taking action. It's evident and global. Again, our participation challenge is about "the where, when and how". We don't have a major problem with “what” and “why”;
- c) There may be potential for further trade union growth and realignment, particularly with occupational trade unions, for example in health.

Bargaining and Representation:

- i) The bargaining and campaign environment is likely to get more complex in future;
- ii) The more diverse models of procurement and contracting, leading to more private/not for profit/community employers to organise and service, to redefine

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

local and sectoral bargaining, more regulation and practice work, not just for legal services.

Learning:

- A) Trade union learning is how we empower people through insight and confidence. It's also how we align values and build skills for change. Time off to attend formal trade union learning is increasingly difficult and creates a further challenge. We need to ensure our learning remains relevant to the aims of the union, aids the development of a culture to take us forward and is accessible.

Challenge of Innovative Competitor/Marketisation in Trade Unions:

- B) We provide life long, subscription-based, face-to-face “protection at work” where people have only one option, to buy a bundle of all the services whether they are needed or not;
- C) Trends in ICT combine to create a threat. Conceivably a company could now purchase the identity and personal data of anyone who searches on-line on dismissal, discrimination, bullying etc.; then market a legal service to those people by email and social media; capture, store and analyse that claim; then outsource that service to a sub-contract supplier; then purchase legal services to meet their customer need on a case by case basis;
- D) We cannot be that service but we need a response.

The review must be inclusive, transparent and bold, examining our structures, operations and objectives with nothing ruled out, while reflecting the founding principles of UNISON:

- I) Ensuring a strong member-led union which is accountable through democratic structures to members;
- II) Recognising the role of member activists who represent the union to members, potential members and the community and who are the bedrock of the union;
- III) Ensuring members are able not only to be represented, but that we seek to provide space and resources to facilitate members to be organised;
- IV) Aiming to ensure that UNISON should always be about increasing the power of members in the workplace facing their employer;
- V) Recognising that devolution of political powers to the nations and administrative responsibilities to regions requires a union that can organise at these levels and develop policy appropriate to that devolved power.

The past quarter of a century has shown that we are at best when we work together. For those who wish to strengthen and enhance our union and build on our achievements of the past 25 years there can be no more pressing issue.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference therefore instructs the National Executive Council to initiate a comprehensive strategic and functional review of the union's organisation, structures and resources at branch, regional and national level, including a review of the Devolution Protocol.

The purpose of the review will be to ensure the most effective use of UNISON's resources to ensure all levels of our union are best placed to meet the challenges of the next 25 years.

The review will be conducted by a task force comprising key stakeholders including representatives from branches, regions, service groups, self-organised groups, young members, retired members and the National Executive Council.

The task force will report back to National Delegate Conference with final recommendations no later than 2020 with an interim report submitted to National Delegate Conference no later than 2019.

Scotland Region

4. Strategic and Functional Review of Organisation, Structure and Resources

As UNISON's 25th birthday approaches we have much to be proud of and much to celebrate.

During this time we have organised millions of workers, developed new leaders, defended public services, challenged discrimination and the absence of rights, demanded equality and supported peace with and for our members, their families and their communities. We have championed such causes at home and throughout the world, in solidarity with our brothers and sisters facing oppression, exploitation and discrimination. We are a force to be reckoned with!

Along the way we have nurtured tried and tested trade union methods from workplace and town hall meetings, to face to face conversations, and the direct involvement of members in the decisions which affect their daily lives. We have also developed new and exciting methods to ensure the participation of our members in the life of the union and the decision-making process.

However this is also the right time to evaluate and review our role as an agent for social change in a rapidly changing world and to prepare for the future. In a union with a majority of women members, the politics of time has always been paramount. We now live in a world where the demands on our members' time is even more critical than it was 25 years ago.

25 years ago UNISON led the way in developing new structures and new forms of democracy and self-organisation to make sure all voices are heard in UNISON. We have shown that despite the challenges, our union, more than any other, is proud to represent our whole membership.

As the world around us has changed, so we have responded by adapting the way we work. Through organising, campaigning and innovation we have come through the toughest of economic times and responded to the political challenges of changing governments, political devolution and political crises in Northern Ireland. And despite

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

the challenge of austerity, when many wrote UNISON off, the union has remained strong, financially viable and retains a strong sense of purpose - a true testament to the efforts of our activists, members and staff.

Our ability and willingness to initiate new ways of organising and recruiting, the hiring of over 300 fighting fund organisers to support hard stretched branches, our courage in taking the hardest of employment cases and continuing to train and educate activists and stewards despite a seventy percent cut in external funding reflects a true determination to confront these challenges and test new solutions.

However, if we are to keep succeeding as a modern progressive member led union for the next 25 years UNISON needs to continue to be bold and forward thinking. We need to be reflective and receptive to new ideas and solutions, finding new thinking and creative proposals to tackle the challenges ahead.

In order to thrive, we have to be fit for purpose with appropriate structures, improved organisation and sufficient resources placed where they are needed, not historically allocated. All resourcing must reflect the ever-changing fragmented work environment and new models of public service delivery that continue to place a huge burden on branches striving to represent every member across multiple employers. The lack of facility time, limited access to non-core employers and members in isolated and fragmented workplaces continue to add to that pressure. Any future resource allocation must also accommodate the new and growing demands placed on the national union for faster, speedier communications, more strategic large-scale litigation, more flexible, targeted training and more demanding and complex sector based bargaining arrangements.

Our future resource allocation must also reflect the major changes that the last 25 years have brought in terms of devolution of powers to Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and the significant implications this has had for the delivery of public services in these regions and nations. This has significant implications for how we organise members, negotiate and bargain on their behalf and campaign on issues that affect their lives.

The financial formula devised in 1993 and revised in 2004 was predicated on single employer branches and streamlined national bargaining arrangements, both barely recognisable today.

Fragmentation and outsourcing continues to reshape the world in which we operate, yet our financial allocations and current formula fail to reflect this.

25 years on, as the needs of devolved regions and nations, branches and the demands of individual members continue to change, a thorough strategic review is essential. The strategic review conducted by UNISON in 1998 paved the way for significant change in the way we organised, bargained and campaigned, but the time has come for a much more extensive strategic review of all aspects of UNISON.

Changing the way we resource our branches has rightly been the topic of much debate in recent years. The debate however has failed to reach the heart of the problem, creating further tensions across branches. Tackling one area of

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

underfunding at the expense of another will never provide the long term financial solution we need for the viability of the whole union.

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The past quarter of a century has shown that we are at best when we work together. For those who wish to strengthen and enhance our union and build on our achievements of the past 25 years there can be no more pressing issue.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to initiate a comprehensive strategic and functional review of the union's organisation, structures and resources at branch, regional and national level, including full consideration of the impact of devolution on these activities.

The purpose of the review will be to ensure the most effective use of UNISON's resources to ensure all levels of our union are best placed to meet the challenges of the next 25 years.

The review will be conducted by a task force comprising key stakeholders including representatives from branches, regions, service groups, self-organised groups and the National Executive Council. This should include representation from each of the devolved regions of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The task force will report back to National Delegate Conference with final recommendations no later than 2020 with an interim report submitted to National Delegate Conference no later than 2019.

Northern Ireland Region

5. UNISON 25 Years On

As UNISON celebrates 25 years of being the biggest and best Union for workers delivering our public services in the public, private, voluntary and community sectors we need to start preparing for the next 25 years. During this time we have come a long way by being innovative and adapting our organising and campaigning. We didn't give up when the UK Tory Government imposed its ideological austerity measures on our members and citizens across our country. Our membership has

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

continued to grow. We've remained strong and financially viable, a testament to the world class union we are. Only made possible due to the efforts of our members, activists and staff.

We have adapted and responded to the changing and challenging world. We have seen devolution of our nations grow with more powers devolved to Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Parts of England too now have some areas devolved. We have remained a strong, fighting, campaigning Union for our members through some of the most difficult years for public services and trade unions. We have continued to fund campaigns with fantastic success particularly around equality and social justice.

Our structures have helped us to represent our whole membership. However, we cannot afford to stand still. Our structures need to be fit for purpose for the next 25 years with resources placed where they are needed to reflect the ever changing fragmented work environment and new models of public service delivery. Allocation of resources must consider the future demands placed on the union taking account of devolution and the more demanding and complex bargaining arrangements. We need speedier digital communications, more strategic scale litigation, more flexible and targeted training for our members and activists.

The financial formula devised in 1993 and revised in 2004 was established on single employer branches and streamlined bargaining arrangements both barely recognisable today. Fragmentation, outsourcing and devolution continue to reshape the world in which we operate, yet our financial allocations and current formula fail to reflect this.

This conference believes a thorough strategic review is essential to maintain a strong and growing union working as one union. Our resources belong to us all and should be shared fairly and guided by the trade union principles of solidarity and equity. Resources must be directed to where they are needed for the benefit of all and not to the detriment of some to ensure that every member wherever they work can be represented.

We need to work together to map out what type of union we need for the future, what our priorities should be and more crucially how we match our resources to deliver those priorities ensuring all levels of our union are best placed to meet the challenges of the next 25 years. We are one union. We have been able to evidence that by working in partnership with a strategic centre, regions and active and efficient branches, we make a difference a massive difference. We must not lose this or our members will suffer. Let us push ahead with the review we need to keep us great and the union of choice for public service workers.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to initiate a comprehensive strategic and functional review of the union's organisation, structures and resources at branch, regional and national level to ensure the most effective use of UNISON's resources.

Conference asks that a task force be created to complete this review comprising of key stakeholders including representatives from branches, regions, service groups, self-organised groups and the National Executive Council.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference asks that the review be inclusive, transparent and bold, examining our structures, operations and objectives with nothing ruled out.

Conference asks that the task force report back to National Delegate Conference with the final recommendation no later than 2020 with an interim report submitted to National Delegate Conference no later than 2019.

Cymru/Wales Region

6. UNISON Review – Decentralisation and Refocusing of UNISON Resources

In the past 25 years of UNISON's existence, the world of work has changed completely.

The single employer union branches structure scenario envisioned by the rule book when the union was formed in 1993 no longer exists.

Branches having to deal with sometimes hundreds of private employers makes life very difficult for branch representatives and stewards who are the backbone of the union.

The union also centrally faces additional demands, with increased costs across the board.

The National Executive Council on 6 December 2017 welcomed a proposal to use the anniversary to launch a review of the union "at all levels" to make sure we get resources to where they are needed to support members and run a modern progressive union.

Conference agrees with those views and therefore calls on the review to consider a complete and thorough assessment of every area of UNISON organisation, including governance, operational, structural, functional, financial arrangements and organisational resources and report back to Conference in 2019 with proposals for improvements in all these areas to both ensure greater effectiveness going forward and identify measures which could contribute towards increased levels of branch resources and organising capacity.

The review group shall include 12 members of the National Executive Council and one representative from each region and will report back to Conference in 2019 with a view to tabling proposals which if agreed by Conference can be implemented immediately together with any additional proposals which may take longer to take effect and could require rule changes to be considered by Conference in 2020.

No area of UNISON structure, function, organisation or activity should be excluded from consideration in the review to ensure a complete assessment of the effectiveness of the union as a whole and to ensure the union is able to best deliver for members in the most efficient ways and ensure the most effective use of financial resources.

Areas which the review should consider will include the following issues but may also consider other areas which may arise in the course of the review:

- 1) Is the current branch funding formula fit for purpose?

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 2) What additional branch resources and organising capacity can be put in place, where needed, by 1 January 2020?
- 3) Rather than the no longer relevant (in most cases) approach of branches being based on single employers should the union to move towards geographical based branches where desired and appropriate?
- 4) Are all current Conferences within the union cost effective in terms of frequency, length and relevance in delivering the best level of services to branches and members?
- 5) Are there alternative means which could achieve the objectives of the union and maintain internal democracy and accountability?
- 6) Do our service groups structures, functions and conferences reflect the reality of the environment we work in going forward and are there options to better organise across the union?
- 7) Whether there should be a cap on branch reserves and if so what the level should be?
- 8) Should branches receive less funding on a sliding level until they meet any agreed cap?
- 9) Should there be a nationally agreed cap on the level of individual honoraria in Branches which can be applied and a cap on branch honoraria in % terms of branch funding in a formula taking account of the size of branches?
- 10) Should branches be able to apply to jointly fund additional organising capacity in a scheme based on cost sharing from branch and national level?
- 11) Has the current overly bureaucratic model of self organisation as an approach delivered the intended aims and objectives of the union and could the equalities agenda be more effectively progressed through alternative means?
- 12) How can communications be improved within the union in a cost effective manner including access to a national directory of branches to assist good practice reflecting new working environments such as devolution, multi regional /national employers / academy chains, employers where we do not have recognition agreements, etc?
- 13) Are there ways to improve the management and effectiveness of national and regional resources and for them to be restructured and refocused to better deliver for members and branches and in the process identify resources to enable branch funding to be increased?
- 14) Can improvements be made in the use of resources in terms of national and regional union premises through a reduction in renting properties where there may be cost effective alternatives to buy so we have assets rather than liabilities and could the union incentivise branches to consider doing the same where possible and appropriate?

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

15) How could we involve more representatives and members in decision making in the union and how could that objective influence our union structures and organisation?

Conference agrees the need for a thorough review of all parts of the union after 25 years of operation and calls for regular reviews on a five yearly basis to ensure as a union we can effectively meet future challenges.

Conference believes that nothing should be excluded from consideration from this review and calls on the National Executive Council to invite submissions and views from all parts of the union, to produce a six monthly update and to report back to Conference with proposals to renew our union structures to improve our operation, effectiveness and relevance in the future and with specific proposals including the level of branch resources which could take place with effect from 1 January 2020.

North West Region

7. UNISON Review – Refocusing of UNISON Resources

This year we celebrate 25 proud years of UNISON. During this time UNISON has become a world leading union. We need to recognise that during this time the environment of work and public services has changed significantly. In this context the single employer branch structure is no longer fit for purpose. Branches are dealing with hundreds of different employers including in the private sector which brings challenges in organising in the workplace. Therefore, the Northern Region welcomes a proposal to review the union at all levels to make sure we get resources to where they are needed to support members and run a modern progressive union.

In order to be fit for purpose we need to ensure the union has appropriate structures, improved organisation and sufficient resources placed where they are needed not historically allocated. All resourcing must reflect the ever-changing fragmented work environment and new models of public service delivery that continue to place a huge burden on branches striving to represent every member across multiple employers. The lack of facility time, limited access to non-core employers and members in isolated and fragmented workplaces continue to add to that pressure. Any future resource allocation must also accommodate the new and growing demands placed on the national union for faster, speedier communications, more strategic large-scale litigation, more flexible, targeted training and more demanding and complex, sector based bargaining arrangements.

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Conference therefore calls on the review to consider a complete and thorough assessment of every area of UNISON organisation, including governance, operational, structural, functional, financial arrangements and organisational resources.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

The review will be conducted by a task force comprising key stakeholders including representatives from branches, regions, service groups, self-organised groups and the National Executive Council.

Conference believes that nothing should be excluded from consideration from this review and calls on the National Executive Council to invite submissions and views from all parts of the union, to produce a six monthly up-date and to report back to Conference with proposals to renew our union structures to improve our operation, effectiveness and relevance in the future and with specific proposals including the level of branch resources which could take place with effect from 1 January 2020.

Northern Region

8. Make 2019 the Year of Young Workers

Conference believes that the strength and sustainability of UNISON depends on the recruitment and organisation of young workers, and their development as activists and leaders.

Conference notes, however, that while UNISON has had some measure of success in recruiting young workers, their numbers have remained at around 5% of the membership, and less than 2% of our activists.

Conference notes that in the wider trade union movement, in 2016 workers under the age of 25 made up 14% of the workforce, but only 4.7% were members of trade unions.

Conference believes that a step-change is required in our recruitment and organisation of young workers, with the appropriate resources devoted to that aim.

Conference welcomes the National Young Members Forum having taken leadership on this matter, and endorses their call for 2019 to be designated as 'The Year of Young Workers'.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Set a target of a 5% increase in young membership and young member activists by conference 2019, and a further 5% in young membership and young member activists by conference 2020, and allocate the resources required to meet this aim;
- 2) Seek to work with the National Young Members Forum to devise and deliver a plan of action for the whole of 2019 – the Year of Young Workers – in promoting this idea throughout the labour movement;
- 3) Publish in its annual report, young members recruitment figures and young activist numbers, to allow for year-on-year comparisons.

National Young Members' Forum

9. Supporting digital organising in UNISON

Conference notes that UNISON has led the UK trade union movement in developing digital technology and tools to support organising and recruitment.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference welcomes recent digital organising initiatives including:

- 1) The creation of the Organising Space to link up activists and allow sharing of good practice in an online community;
- 2) Using webinars and online communities to transform activist learning and development;
- 3) New tools to help local branches to map their workplaces and record engagement with members and new joiners;
- 4) The use of digital industrial action consultation processes that mean the union can track engagement with issues and gives vital information about how best to build a campaign for higher rates of participation in strike ballots. This will be crucial in developing a robust UNISON response to the new ballot thresholds contained in the Trade Union Act;
- 5) The new branch website platform now being rolled out through a series of regional hack days supports groups of branches to develop a simple version of the UNISON website, linked to national resources and tools, with on going support and secure hosting.

With more than 70% of new members now joining the union online, our members increasingly expect their union to be able to communicate with them, support them and mobilise them through digital channels.

Digital tools can never replace knowledgeable and skilled local activists, but they can support them. Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Continue to make resources available to support digital organising initiatives;
- b) Share and promote the work UNISON has done on digital transformation with other unions, through the TUC;
- c) Support branches in developing cost-effective digital ways to communicate, organise and engage our members.

Hertfordshire

10. Using Digital Media to meet our objectives

Conference notes the work that has been going on within UNISON to assess and utilise social and digital media for organising and campaigning. Conference welcomes the innovative 'What's App' pilot projects in Yorkshire and Humberside Region and East Midlands Regions and the introduction of the new Organising Framework, the digital solution rolled out in 2017 to assist branches in completing their Joint Regional and Branch Assessments (JBRA).

Conference particularly commends the recognition that there are increasing demands on branches and that there are vast numbers of new activists who in fragmented areas and that long-standing processes such as the JBRA can be modernised and made more efficient and accessible to a new digital generation of activists using new easy-to-use digital tools. Conference notes the real benefit to

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

branches in seeing real time statistical information in a clear and simple to understand format to inform, and the availability of tools to assist with action planning.

Conferences acknowledges that UNISON collects a vast amount of information and this is only beneficial when collected in an efficient, consistent and co-ordinated way to inform decision-making at all levels. Conference also acknowledges the challenges and risk associated with new regulatory requirements like the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and statutory trade union Membership Audit certificate it this is not done in a structured, secure and accountable fashion.

The grassroots 2015 Bernie Sanders presidential bid in the USA showed how a high tech campaign could have a massive impact with few resources by giving local volunteers real time voter and supporter data and social media tools to maximise its usefulness for local campaigning. UNISON, and other unions, are starting to use digital consultative ballots or surveys to build intelligence for workplace campaigns too.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to continue with this approach and in particular to explore:

- 1) How the Organising Framework can be further developed to assist with/ align with other branch administrative processes, such as the annual branch accounts and budgeting;
- 2) How other digital solutions can assist branches and regions in their day-to-day functions;
- 3) What support it can offer branches and regions on new regulatory requirements like GDPR;
- 4) How UNISON can get the most of the vast amount of data it holds to assist branches and regions meet our legal obligations and the union's key objectives.

West Yorkshire Transport

11. The New Workplace challenge

Conference notes that UNISON has successfully represented many members in the 25 years since the formation of the union. When UNISON was formed the majority of branches were single employers, or a small group of employers, and the branch facilitated organisation and representation in those branches without recourse to the wider union structures or needing to facilitate other means of representation.

Over the past decade public services have become increasingly fragmented with many sectors facing outsourcing challenges in organising their members. It is not unusual that some larger branches now have a significant number of their members outside of the main employer and that there are real challenges in organising and representing in many of those workplaces.

Conference further notes the motion passed in 2017 which required the National Executive Council to produce a paper setting out the various options for branches

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

with a fragmented workforce however conference recognises that there needs to be a full review that starts to consider how we build sustainable power in those workforces.

Therefore, Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Carry out a full review of all models currently being used by branches and regions to facilitate representation and organisation in multi-employer branches;
- 2) Consider options for building power for workers in smaller employers;
- 3) Report back to Conference on options and models for UNISON to organise a growing number of members in multi-employer branches.

Coventry City

Recruitment and Organising

12. Promoting the Union as an Organising Union

Conference notes that since the formation of UNISON twenty five years ago there has been significant progress in recruiting and organising new members. As a result of the work done across the whole union, UNISON is now the largest UK trade union. It is particularly pleasing, from the point of view of the future of the union, to note that there has been a year on year increase in the number of young members joining, at a time when other unions report difficulties in attracting young members. The continued increase in private sector membership shows the importance of following public service workers into the private sector, even while UNISON remains committed to public provision of public services. All this has been achieved at a time when the challenges facing the trade union movement both nationally and internationally have never been greater.

Nevertheless Conference is aware that much remains to be done to turn UNISON into an 'organising union'. The variation in membership density between branches and employers shows the scope for increased effectiveness. One of the biggest challenges remains embedding best practice across the whole union.

Conference believes that to be more effective we need to ensure that all parts of the union are focussed on:

- 1) Increasing membership engagement both in terms of the democratic processes and in the promotion of UNISON policies. Self Organised Groups and Migrant Networks clearly have a role to play in this crucial work;
- 2) Developing more activists across the whole union, particularly in those areas where there is under-representation such as the private sector and from areas that are under-represented such as low paid women, Black and migrant workers.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to look at how this can be achieved and report back to a future Conference, having regard to the following challenges:

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- a) Making sure that best practice is more effectively disseminated to activists and organisers at all levels and in all parts of the union as and when it is identified;
- b) Overcoming the barriers posed in organising employers whose workforce cuts across current branch, regional and service group boundaries;
- c) The challenge faced by branches in organising and representing an increasingly fragmented membership, when many activists employed by the core public sector employer are denied facility time, particularly when covering workers not employed by the core employer;
- d) How to ensure greater inclusion at branch and regional and national level for private and voluntary sector members;
- e) Preparing the union to deal with the threat posed by automation, both in terms of its impact on jobs and organising.

Recognising that we need a whole union response including support from our retired members.

National Executive Council

13. Organising and growing our membership in the Private Contractors and Community

Conference notes that UNISON membership in Private Contractors and Community employers continues to grow due to both increased recruitment but also increased contracting. In 2017 recruitment in these areas now represents nearly 31% of all new joiners nationally. This proportion was matched almost exactly in the East Midlands, with around 6% joining from Community and 26% joining from private employers across all service groups. In both private contractors and Community employers UNISON is recruiting more members than its losing, leading to a gradual change in the overall composition of the union.

Conference reflects that the changing make-up of employers in UNISON presents huge challenges, particularly at regional and branch level. This growing membership is highly fragmented; only a small number of employers have a substantial UNISON membership, with the rest of these members in small isolated workplaces like nurseries and small care homes. Many branches do not have facility time to support these members and cuts have reduced our number of activists and put increasing pressure on time and resources. The only way that UNISON will be able support members in Community employers and private contractors is by developing an organising approach at all levels of the union. As Conservative policy at Westminster continues to encourage privatisation UNISON faces a huge challenge, however it also has the opportunity to significantly grow in the outsourced sector.

In the experience of Conference, there is no single organising model for members in private and Community employers. Regions and branches all face specific local circumstances and challenges, ranging from geographical boundaries to hostile employers. Conference however welcomes the way many branches and regions across the country have risen to meet some of these challenges and commends the innovative and creative solutions they have found.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to include and prioritise private company and Community service group organising in their proposed strategic review of resources.

In the interim period before the review reports, Conference calls on the National Executive Council to campaign for facility time in all employers where UNISON has members and to separately consider and promote the following suggestions for:

1) Branches to:

- a) Identify through their Joint Branch Assessment one, or a number of, private or Community employers to target for recruitment and activist development. This should be done with due regard to any National Executive Council national targets or wider national or regional priorities;
- b) Continue to reach out to their current private and Community membership through targeted communication or organising;
- c) Encourage members to take part in the UNISON National Private Contractor Forums;
- d) Elect or appoint a nominated officer within the branch committee to have oversight in organising and supporting members in private and Community employers.

2) Regions to:

- a) Work with branches to look at ideas on how to structure branches and allocate members from private and Community employers;
- b) Use Fighting Fund, Regional Pool and other resources, where appropriate, to support branches to organise and recruit in private and Community employers;
- c) Identify as part of their Regional plan a number of strategic target employers in the private and Community sector, paying due accord to any National Executive Council priorities;
- d) Continue to support new activists to become trained and active, and to ensure that members from private and community employers are engaged with regional structures and democracy.

East Midlands Region

Education and Training

14. Learning for the Future

When UNISON was formed in 1993 it brought together three unions, all of which had proud histories of training and supporting members and activists. In 1994 UNISON launched its Open College Network, and shortly afterwards undertook a revamp of the innovative Return to Learn and Women's Lives training programme, which have helped thousands of members reclaim educational opportunities that had been

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

denied them in the past. It has not looked back since. UNISON was instrumental in establishing what is now known as the Union Learning Fund (ULF) programme, and has continued to develop and introduce our own member learning offer alongside ULF funded activity.

Similarly, our activist education programme was at the forefront of developing student centred learning and developing skills and knowledge across the range of activists to support an organising union approach. Many UK and international unions emulated this model. Over the last 25 years UNISON has gone on to develop its own internal activist training programme delivered by national, regional and branch lay tutors, meaning that despite the consequences of diminishing funding for TUC education we can train and develop over 10,000 activists year on year.

Conference notes that UNISON's member learning and activist training programmes have been robust and innovative in responding to the rapidly changing working environments that our members and activists now work in. We have reviewed and overhauled our core activist training materials and delivery methods; we have created new vibrant training and materials and developed e-learning materials on our own learning site.

Whilst we can be justly proud of our achievements over the last 25 years, we need to make sure that our member learning and activist education programmes continue to evolve to meet the challenges that lie ahead in the rapidly changing world that we live in. We have barely begun to understand the consequences of global digitalisation and automation. We know that the onward march of privatisation and fragmentation of public services presents structural difficulties in reaching and supporting our members and activists, many who feel disconnected from their branch, our challenge will be to reach out and provide learning and educational opportunities and support to all our members and activists.

Conference recognises that we need to build on our successes and grasp the opportunities that challenges can bring. Now is the time to review, evaluate and reshape the learning and education activity that underpins our ability to continue to be a responsive, organising union that will support the learning and development needs of members and activists into the future.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Evaluate the impact and transformational benefits of member and activist learning;
- 2) Evaluate the current delivery methods of UNISON member learning and activist education programmes, including the effectiveness and value of delivery by the union, our partners and other stakeholders;
- 3) Explore options to ensure that UNISON's member learning and activist training programmes remain relevant and reflect the future needs of members in the changing working environment and that our learning and training courses, materials and resources are offered in accessible formats so that our entire membership is able to participate fully.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

National Executive Council

15. 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 seven 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

16. Training for Stewards in sign posting members with mental health conditions

Conference we bring this motion as it has become apparent when reading previous motions to Conference particularly from the last Conference in 2017 on the subject of mental health in the work place, there is a growing need for steward training to enable us to effectively signpost our members to the correct services to meet their mental health needs. We are calling on Conference to use past examples of best practise which are currently in place. The training provided for the learning reps that support them to signpost members who have learning needs is a good model for all unison stewards to have access too but with a mental health focus. We recognise that we can not be the experts in everything but being able to support and effectively signpost our members who may be struggling with a mental health problem be it long term or situational is key. It's important to take action on mental health now. The World Health Organisation predicts that depression will be the world's most common illness by 2030 and suggests the global burden of the condition will be greater than for illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

We call upon the National Executive Council to support the development of a mental health tool kit that stewards can call upon to effectively signpost members, locally we

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

have created and developed a triangle of care which has local numbers and contacts relevant to services which all stewards have which they can carry in their diaries. These support stewards to effectively and confidently signpost and inform members of services they can access. We have also created business cards for all stewards to give to any member who reports to us that they feel they are a risk to themselves, to others or from others. On these cards are national and local mental health phone numbers for members to call for immediate support and all these number are available 24 hours. We also have put on the front of these cards encouragement for members to also contact their General Practitioner or if they are very concerned about their safety to present at Accident and Emergency. To support stewards, we have created a phone rota of three stewards who have extensive experience working in mental health to offer their advice regarding members they are working with but also support for stewards to debrief if they are feeling they need to discuss any cases which have impacted on their mental health.

An employer who signs up to be a mindful employer have agreed to work within the charter and are required to show that they are positive about mental health which included attending mental health awareness training. A recent Mind study showed the 48% of public sector workers were off work due to their mental health compared to 32% of private workers off work for the same reason. The research also discovered that 61% of public sector employees felt unsupported by their work place compared to 49% of private sector workers.

We ask Conference to consider including basic mental health awareness for stewards as part of the initial steward training and recognising the importance of this having local input so stewards are aware of what is available in their area. We feel that this training also needs to include what is a mindful employer so stewards are able to challenge employers who are not meeting the requirements to fulfil this.

We are asking Conference to recognise the importance of supporting stewards to be able to signpost members to timely support for their mental health, for unison to create a tool kit to support stewards and in turn for stewards to support managers who may have staff who are struggling with their mental health and for unison to make sure that services who are mindfulness employers are held accountable.

Northamptonshire Health Workers

17. Work Related Stress and Mental Health Wellbeing

Conference believes that austerity cuts have led to staff across services bearing the burden of ever increasing workloads they are feeling overworked, feeling greater levels of job insecurity, anxiety, work-related stress and many are also feeling bullied and harassed.

Conference therefore urges the National Executive Council to support branches in pressing employers to:

- 1) Ensure that workplace and individual Stress Risk Assessments are completed and updated annually or where there is a change in working practices/procedures;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 2) Ensure that the early identification of work related stress and/or mental health illness is treated as a priority;
- 3) Ensure that confidential specialist counselling services are made available to staff on request or when referred by occupational health services or a GP;
- 4) Put in place a consistent support mechanism for staff with work related stress or mental health illness which incorporates regular reviews and avoids added stress or threat of dismissal.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council:

- a) To build on the success of the 2017 UNISON Stress Seminar and Stress Toolkit by continuing to highlight the effects of work related stress and workplace risks to mental health illness;
- b) To develop Mental Health at Work training for UNISON activists;
- c) To highlight the ongoing psychosocial health concerns of UNISON's membership to employers.

Employers have a statutory duty of care to all of their staff and they need to be reminded that this duty extends to all aspects of the employees' health and wellbeing including the serious problem of work related stress and its potential to lead to more serious mental health difficulties.

UNISON will take all necessary steps to ensure that our members are protected and employers are held to account if they fail in their duty to protect our members' health and wellbeing.

City Of Edinburgh

18. Branch Treasurer Training

Conference recognises that all branches are now expected to use OLBA (On Line Branch Accounts) tool for their branch accounts, and also the importance of having well trained branch treasurers.

Conference also recognises that the current training available to Branch treasurers equips them for the day to day branch accounting. However, in recent times, additional features have been added to OLBA to assist treasurers, but without any notification.

These additional features are beneficial to treasurers in producing more in-depth budgets and reports for branches, and come with an online help button but with no face-to-face training programme for treasurers who may require assistance.

OLBA can now help a branch create/edit a budget and then, once this budget is inputted onto OLBA, the objective budget can be compared to the actual budget. The income/expenditure trend reporting tab can help to compare how members and income as increased or decreased over the last five years. There is also a new tab to help you look at a trial balance throughout the year. These are new features.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

If a branch is to fully understand the concept behind activity based budgeting, and then, use branch funding to the fullest, to help with what is important to them, and this may be recruitment or campaigns, then additional updated training needs to be provided to branch treasurers who require it.

Conference requests the National Executive Council to produce an updated training package for branch treasurers and other OLBA users, to cover all its possible functions, and to roll out the updated training to all branches via the regions to ensure consistency.

City of Wolverhampton

Participation

19. Low Pay and Women in UNISON

Conference celebrates the fact that the hard work of our low paid women members has been central to all the many successes of our union.

UNISON's principles of proportionality and fair representation means that some seats on our elected bodies, including the National Executive Council, are reserved for women low-paid members, so that the make-up fairly represents the wider union.

We have a variety of places where low paid seats exist, and low pay is included in branch delegations to National Delegate Conference.

The definition of "low paid" reflects the median gross weekly earnings for all jobs (full time or part time) and is revised each year.

The median gross weekly earnings figure for 2017/18 has been calculated in the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings at £448.60, a 2.3% increase on last year.

This means the threshold for election to reserved (low pay) seats in the union is now £9.94 an hour. This is reviewed each year in October.

£9.94 per hour x 37 hour week x 52 weeks equals a salary of up to £19,124.56

The national living wage (set by government) is currently £7.50 per hour if you are over 25 years of age.

The living wage (set by the Living Wage Foundation) is currently £8.45 per hour in the UK, (£9.75 in London).

Despite many years of attempting to fill all low paid seats in UNISON's democratic structures, many vacancies exist. Our membership system does not record our members hourly pay rates, and the application for membership asks no specific questions on whether the person is low paid within our definition (paid less than £9.94 per hour).

It is concerning that not all organising initiatives, whether led nationally, regionally or at branch level, explicitly and proactively seek to organise low paid women.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Questions remain on what more can be done to encourage our low paid women members at branch; region and national level.

For some of our members it may be that they don't know about reserved/low paid seats; it may be that there is an absence of training; or isolation; or awareness of rights to time off work for trade union duties.

Within UNISON there may still be a lack of support and encouragement and positive recognition of the importance of hearing the voices and views of our low paid women members.

Additionally low paid women may not be aware that any expenses could be paid to them in advance so that they are never out of pocket.

Conference affirms its commitment to supporting and encouraging our low paid women members to take their rightful place in UNISON's democratic structures. Our union will not be able to continue to be the premier public service union unless it continues to demonstrate that its relevant to low paid women in the constantly evolving workforce. Low pay will only be tackled by strong, well organised unions.

Conference commends work in Eastern region which has prioritised low paid women in its organising strategy for 2018 and is working with branches to implement a range of initiatives.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Investigate what barriers to engagement exist for our low paid women members;
- 2) Produce guidance on the role of National Executive Council and Service Group Executive members, including the frequency and location of meetings, so women are clear about why they should seek to be elected to senior roles in their union and how they will be supported;
- 3) Consider whether activist education can be delivered in alternative ways to encouraged more low paid women to access it;
- 4) Report back to conference in 2019 on findings and recommendations for positive action.

Eastern Region

Negotiating and Bargaining

Bargaining

20. Protecting our members and growing in private contractors

Conference notes that in the 25 years since UNISON was created the world our members work in has changed considerably. Thatcher's government opened the door to public sector privatisation and this has been built upon by successive governments. Under the coalition government outsourcing doubled and the current Westminster government shows no sign of changing course. We are seeing the biggest squeeze on public service funding in a generation; with continued austerity

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

causing crisis in the NHS and cut backs across all the areas our members work. People who gave their lives to public service used to be rewarded with fair terms and conditions, decent pay and secure pensions; however too many now face zero hours contracts and the minimum wage. In some areas the delivery of services by private companies has become the norm, like in social care where 81% of people in England work for an independent provider. Many precious public services continue to be sold off to the highest bidder and we see the growing issue of privatisation through the back door as English NHS trusts and councils increasingly see wholly owned subsidiaries as a way of outsourcing cuts.

Conference also notes that our union is changing too, to reflect the vast range of employers our members now work for. In 2017 over 30% of new members we recruited work for private or community employers, and private contractors continue to be the fastest growing group of UNISON members.

Conference notes that the collapse of Carillion earlier this year exposed not just the failures of privatisation and the danger of private companies running important services but also demonstrated how vulnerable our members are when these outsourcing experiments go wrong. In the blink of an eye thousands of people delivering public services were suddenly fearful for their jobs, their pensions and their livelihoods. Conference welcomes UNISON's continued commitment to fighting privatisation and notes that many of the warnings we have given over the years have been proved true.

To enable UNISON to support and protect members in private employers across the UK we need to develop an organising approach at all levels of the union. Where contracts have been outsourced we have a duty to follow and support our members, organising for recognition, facility time and bargaining rights. By building union power in these employers we hold them and the government to account. By developing and training activists in the private sector we will be able to take the pressure off branches. There is a real opportunity to significantly grow in the outsourced sector and to empower our members working there.

Conference notes the ongoing work the Private Contractors National Forum is doing to give our members in private employers a voice at all levels of the union. Going forward these voices need to be at the centre of shaping a union strategy that is fit for the next 25 years and inclusive for all. Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to make the case against privatisation and to campaign for services to be brought back in house;
- 2) Campaign for it to be a legal requirement for an in-house bid to be fully considered prior to any decision to outsource or retender;
- 3) Encourage and support branches to actively participate in procurement processes wherever possible, arguing for tendering bodies to fund contracts at a sustainable and fair level. There should be a focus on campaigning for union recognition and access to be part of any outsourced contract and for the Real Living Wage and pay uplifts to be funded. Campaigns should include requirements for facility time to be transferred and protected;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 4) Support branches in identifying private employers in their area to strategically target for recruitment and activist development. This should be done with due regard to any National Executive Council, national or regional priorities. The development of more reps in private employers must be a priority across the union. Where we have density and activists we have the strength and power to hold employers to account;
- 5) Promote, in partnership with relevant service groups, a targeted campaign to recruit and build activism in the social care sector; with targeted materials and communications for care workers. Members who work in social care should be at the core of designing and leading this strategy;
- 6) Campaign at all levels of the union for better pensions in the private sector, including skilling up our members to engage with scheme management and for wider access to relevant public sector schemes for outsourced workers;
- 7) Continue to develop a targeted and relevant range of communications to reach out to our private sector members and make them feel a full part of the union. Their participation in seminars, training, and the private company forums should be encouraged and enabled by all levels of the union. Branches and regions should also be encouraged to look at ways they can make their structures more inclusive and accessible to private contractor members;
- 8) Devise a joined up strategy in liaison with national service groups and devolved nations, for campaigning closely with regions on pay in the private sector; recognising that a vast majority of bargaining is done on a contract by contract level. The approach needs to be informed, strategic and coordinated, with members and branches supported with guidance on submitting pay claims and training on the complexities of how pay is funded through contracts. Branches have a big role to play in pressuring tendering bodies for the funding for pay uplifts.

Private Contractors National Forum

21. Effectively Representing members working across Service and Geographical Boundaries

Conference believes that health and social care services are interdependent and we reaffirm our support for integration as a means of improving the seamless delivery of care.

However, Conference remains concerned that, in a context of ongoing cuts to both health and social care services, 'integration' might be used as cover for changes that are driven primarily by cost pressures rather than service improvement.

Conference notes that service integration and reorganisation is taking different forms in different places. This might involve new service delivery arrangements that cut across boundaries between health and social care services, and across geographical boundaries between health trusts and councils. In Knowsley, the council is considering forming a joint venture company with neighbouring authorities to provide existing in-house social services functions.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

The new institutional and employment arrangements that emerge can be bewildering for members and for branches. Conference believes that there are basic principles that should guide our response to such developments. These include:

- 1) That reorganisation should not mean increased private sector involvement in service delivery or any loss of democratic accountability;
- 2) That existing staff should not suffer a worsening of their terms and conditions;
- 3) That new starters should not be recruited on inferior terms and conditions – restructuring service delivery should not mean worsening employment standards for future generations of public service workers.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to work with regions to:

- a) Condemn and oppose any attempt to use integration as a cover for attacking staff terms and conditions;
- b) Provide support to branches in dealing with restructuring and integration initiatives;
- c) Help facilitate work across branch and service group boundaries so as to best protect jobs, pay and conditions, and services.

Knowsley

22. Trade Union Facilities

Conference notes the previous decision of conference in 2016 regarding Trade Union Facilities. The motion required the National Executive Council to report back on its progress to Conference 2017, however, Conference recognises that this is still an ongoing issue for UNISON branches across all sectors.

With many of the requirements of the Trade Union Act now in force conference instructs the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Update Conference 2019 on all work progressed on this issue since the original motion was passed in 2016;
- 2) Ensure that guidance is produced for branches on the support that can be requested in cases where the employer is proposing to reduce facility time;
- 3) Continue to work with Labour Link to highlight the benefits of trade unions in the workplace.

Coventry City

23. Maternity Rights

Conference notes with deep concern recent research by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) that too many women continue to experience pregnancy and maternity discrimination in UK workplaces. According to the EHRC research, of the 3,034 employers surveyed:

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 1) 70% said women should declare up front about pregnancy during recruitment;
- 2) 25% said it was reasonable during recruitment to ask women about their plans to have children;
- 3) 28% said that protection from redundancy during Ordinary Maternity Leave was unreasonable;
- 4) 27% felt pregnancy put an unreasonable cost burden on the workplace;
- 5) 17% felt pregnant women and mothers were less interested in career progression and promotion than other employees.

Given that employers felt able to disclose such discriminatory and unlawful opinions, it is unsurprising that the EHRC's survey of 3254 mothers found that:

- a) 77% said they had a negative or possibly discriminatory experience during pregnancy, maternity leave and/or on return from maternity leave;
- b) 11% felt forced to leave their job;
- c) 20% said they experienced harassment or negative comments related to pregnancy or flexible working from their employer/colleagues;
- d) 10% were discouraged from attending antenatal appointments;
- e) 51% of mothers who had their flexible working request approved said they felt it resulted in negative consequences.

Conference believes that tackling pregnancy and maternity discrimination is vital in tackling fundamental inequalities in our labour market. Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- i) Continue to highlight the rights of women whilst pregnant and on their return to work;
- ii) Campaign to maintain and improve anti-discrimination laws, maternity and parental leave and pay, health and safety rights which are currently derived from EU directives when the UK leaves the EU;
- iii) Campaign to ensure that pregnant women and new mothers working in the insecure economy have meaningful access to basic employment rights including attending ante-natal appointments, health and safety at work and paid sick leave;
- iv) Campaign to extend existing protections against unfair redundancy to cover notification of pregnancy through to six months after return to work;
- v) Continue to work and campaign with Maternity Action to protect maternity rights at work and extend support to vulnerable and destitute women in our communities.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

North Derbyshire Healthcare

24. Support for workers with families

Conference recognises that many workers with families struggle to achieve a good work life balance and that balancing childcare and work demands can be difficult, particularly for low paid, shift workers and for workers who are looking after children on their own.

Many employers do not have 'family friendly' policies and provide no support to their workers in family emergencies and significant events. This, for example, then requires workers to use up annual leave when children are sick or to respond to the child's education or to miss out on key events in the child's development.

Conference calls on National Executive Council, working with the Service Groups and Self Organised Groups, to draw up a 'Working Parents Charter' to assist branches to campaign for improved workplace policies to support parents.

South Lanarkshire

25. Support For Members with Caring Responsibilities

Conference continues to condemn current Government policy in relation to the inadequate funding for both health and social care and resolves to continue to campaign for cuts to be reversed.

Conference recognises that some members are forced to provide caring support for family members and they deserve support from employers in recognition of the additional stresses and strains that this imposes.

It recognises that some employers have already introduced carer friendly policies and welcomes this initiative. It instructs the National Executive Council to formulate a model policy that can be used as a campaigning tool to encourage all employers to adopt, be they public sector or private employers.

It agrees that this issue must be a priority and that it needs to be brought forward to the TUC for cross union support.

Surrey County

26. Disability Leave Agreements

Conference notes that, employees with disability continue to find themselves treated less favourably than their non-disabled colleagues with regard to the management of sickness absence. The Equality Act 2010 does not seem to offer protection around absence management for those with physical or mental health problems.

For a number of years now, UNISON has been promoting the use of its model Disability Leave Agreement (DLA). The DLA means that someone with a known disability would have any absences related to that disability counted separately from any 'routine' sickness absence. That would include any illness from procedures, time out for training on equipment, counselling or side-effects of medication related to their disability. However, as expected, employers have not been keen to adopt the

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

DLA, choosing instead to subject staff to capability reviews and unrealistic standard setting processes.

With an ageing workforce, and the recent increase in retirement age, there is more potential for staff to become ill whilst in employment and absence levels increase. We need to ensure that we have systems in place that can support our staff to be in work, that recognise that some medical conditions mean that staff have higher than average absence rates, and that we do not unnecessarily penalise staff for having a disability. Otherwise we risk losing a wealth of knowledge and experience from our health service – something that we can ill afford to do.

Conference asks the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with branches through regional offices to raise the awareness and promote the use of the model Disability Leave Policy (DLP);
- 2) Work with branches to gather information on the current use of DLPs across the union;
- 3) Highlight the need to have the status of the policy recognised and adopted by employers and made a legal obligation;
- 4) Work with Self Organised Groups to raise the profile of the DLP and its importance and benefit for their members.

Scottish Healthcare

27. Mental Health and Employment

Employers are failing in their duty of care towards staff with mental health issues. Black Staff with mental health issues are not malingerers, faking it or simply seeking attention.

Mental Health affects people in different ways it can be difficult to identify, treat and manage and managers and staff should show greater tolerance and patience toward staff with mental health issues.

UNISON should continue to work to promote greater awareness of mental health issues amongst employers and management through the various activities and research health packs available to activist.

One of the major factors in mental health issues is that the same issue, such as depression, anxiety or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), can and will impact individuals differently, and as such cannot be painted with a broad brush policy and must be dealt with on an individual basis.

A significant number of mental health issues can result in physical issues such as a depressed immune system which leave people susceptible to illness, fatigue, headaches and other difficulties.

These physical symptoms and illnesses should be treated as part of the mental health issue, not as a separate unrelated issue that would attract formal warnings if taken in isolation.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Managers should be required to seek the advice of human resources support, occupational health, taking into account reasonable adjustment, and any other suitable resources, and must be able to demonstrate that every consideration of potential reasonable adjustments and support have been undertaken prior to any formal action being carried out.

The improvement of the occupational health referral system is essential, as the use of scripted questions can be counterproductive and does not allow for the individual nature of an illness to be discussed and taken into account.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Examine and discuss how training can be provided to activist to ensure that through the campaigning and bargaining agenda with employers, all managers and staff attend at least basic levels of training on mental health issues, in order to provide them with the adequate knowledge to deal with mental health situations;
- 2) Encourage and continue to promote awareness of mental health issues for Black workers in the workplace;
- 3) Ensure that literature is developed and provided to members who are representing Black members to gain a better understanding of some of the complex issues they face;
- 4) Continue to promote awareness amongst activists of the importance to ensure employers are aware of the necessity to train managers in mental health and how to support and engage Black workers;
- 5) Promote tolerance of mental health issues in the workplace amongst employees and the wider community;
- 6) Encourage the use of robust Stress Risk Assessments in order to eliminate potential stressors.

National Black Members' Committee

28. Mental Health Awareness in the Workplace

Conference recognises that we spend a considerable amount of our lives at work and with more of us working longer hours, under more pressure, having mental health first-aid support in the workplace is critical not just for employees, but for employers too. Mental health problems including stress, depression and anxiety account for almost 70 million days off sick per year, the most of any health condition.

We all have mental health, just as we all have physical health, and in both cases we need parity in the employer's awareness. It is estimated that one in four people experience a mental health problem in any given year, and that one in six employees is living with depression, anxiety or stress-related problems at any time. However, many of us, and in particular the employer, know little about mental health. We often don't spot the signs that a colleague, employee, or we ourselves are struggling, and this delays help and recovery.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

For disabled workers, workplace bullying and discrimination and lack of reasonable adjustments can cause mental health problems or exacerbate already existing mental health problems.

Many mental health problems have a significant ongoing impact on daily life and in such cases workers are protected by the provisions of the Equality Act and meet the legal definition of disabled, although often neither the worker or the branch steward is aware that they qualify for this protection, with more awareness raising required.

Good local negotiation with employers can extend some of these protections to other workers experiencing mental health problems who may not come under the strict legal definition but where reasonable adjustments could facilitate their return to work, with benefits for both worker and employer.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to raise awareness of the triggers that influence poor mental health;
- 2) Call on employers to recognise and support the training of mental health first aiders and mental health awareness training and call on employers to recognise mental health first aiders in the workplace as they would standard first aiders;
- 3) Call on the government to realise that the increase in poor mental health will intensify as people are working longer;
- 4) Disseminate and promote UNISON's mental health bargaining guide and encourage service groups and sectors to raise with employers.

National Disabled Members Committee

29. Apprenticeships

Conference recognises that the age profile of our union is increasing. This is partially due to the fact that there are fewer and fewer young people, particularly those under 20 working in public services.

Young people are more likely than the older population to be unemployed and it is difficult to get a job without experience of work that could be drawn upon in interview situations.

In 2014, the Scottish Government published its "Developing the young workforce – youth employment strategy" with a significant component of this to work with employers. Large employers, such as the NHS have been expected to increase their efforts to recruit young people, firstly through apprenticeships and then by turning them into substantive employees.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to develop a strategic approach to apprentices which includes specific membership options, targeted support, negotiations to improve rates of pay, high quality training. This should also build upon the good practice of existing work that branches do on apprenticeships.

Lanarkshire Health

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Health and Safety

30. The importance of Health and Safety

All too often the Tory press label attempts to provide a safe workplace as 'health and safety' gone mad. However, Conference notes that hundreds of people are killed each year in accidents at work and over 1 million are injured and a further 2 million suffer illness caused by or made worse by their work.

The importance health and safety at work is acknowledged by enlightened employers and enshrined in law for those less willing, however, there is little or no recognition of its importance in the education system. Through schools and education, children of all ages can be made aware of what health and safety is and what it is meant to do.

Too many times we have read about young children being killed because they have climbed onto and subsequently fallen through the roof of a disused building or been playing with matches, running out into the path of a moving vehicle, playing on railway lines, the list goes on and on.

It is important we do all we can to teach young children about the importance of health and safety, therefore Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with Labour Link, the TUC and other relevant bodies to lobby parliament to include Health and Safety on the National Curriculum;
- 2) Work with the Higher Education Service Group Executive to work towards producing a teacher's handbook on the importance of health and safety in schools, the workplace and in society as a whole.

West Yorkshire Transport

31. Cuts to Building Inspectors and Environmental Health

Local government is struggling under continuing Tory cuts leading to a reduction to staff and services. At the same time, many universities and other public sector employers are embarking on large scale building programmes.

Conference understands local councils are responsible for safeguarding the health and safety of people in and around new buildings as well as environmental health who have ongoing responsibilities including ensuring workplaces are safe.

Conference notes and recognises that this is an issue which affects all UNISON members in all sectors where we organise, across all Service Groups

Conference is concerned that teams responsible for building inspections and environmental health are being subject to cuts, reduction in size and even outsourcing. Cuts to funding will impact on the health and safety of Higher Education workers and students, and workers and the public in other building developments.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to:

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 1) Conduct an audit of local councils to ascertain if building inspection and environmental health teams have been cut, reduced or outsourced;
- 2) Lobby central government to reinstate funding to ensure that new developments meet health and safety standards;
- 3) To pro-actively encourage and support all UNISON branches to support local campaigns for the defence of Building Inspectorate and Environmental Health staffing levels, and to restore numbers and funding wherever possible.

Staffordshire University

Pay

32. Pay Up Now! - Real Pay Rises For All Public Service Workers

Conference notes that public service workers have been subjected to nearly a decade of real-terms pay cuts, as a direct result of the austerity programmes of successive Westminster governments, which also get passed through to devolved administrations.

Conference notes that the burden of paying for the greed of financial speculators and failed regulation of the financial services sector has disproportionately been passed on to dedicated public service workers, the services they provide and those who rely on them – rather than those who caused the crisis.

Conference notes that the government formally abandoned the punishing 1% public sector pay cap on September 12th 2017, yet most public service workers - including those employed in the private and voluntary sectors delivering public services - are still being hit with real terms pay cuts this year as inflation outstrips pay rises.

Conference further notes that the government continues to place jobs and services on the line by lifting the cap without providing adequate funding for the real terms pay rises that all public service workers need.

Conference welcomes Labour's manifesto commitment to end the public sector pay cap and Labour Conference's unanimous support for UNISON's motion calling for a real-terms pay rise and catch-up pay to return public sector pay to at least pre-crisis levels under the next Labour government.

Conference believes that after years of pay cuts, it is time for real pay rises for all public-service workers.

Conference believes that that real-terms public service pay rises are both desirable and affordable, having a positive multiplier impact on the economy.

Conference welcomes the TUC mass demonstration on May 12th 2018 and wants to encourage more joint union protests.

Conference believes that what is best for public services is a return to meaningful pay negotiation and bargaining across the public sector, with pay rises fully funded by the government and a return to at least pre-financial crisis levels of pay.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue the Pay Up Now! campaign for real pay rises across all public services, reversing the impact of the pay cap and restoring public sector pay to at least pre-financial crisis levels;
- 2) Campaign for the fair funding of all public services – and an end to punishing austerity – through progressive taxation and reversing corporation tax cuts;
- 3) Ensure the campaign is linked in to UNISON's wider anti-austerity campaigning and public-facing campaigns including Public Service Champions;
- 4) Boost collective bargaining as the best means of tackling wage inequality and regional pay disparities;
- 5) Campaign to oppose the myth that higher income tax is a punishment and encourage people to view progressive taxation, including on corporations, as a contribution towards the provision of decent public services;
- 6) Campaign for a real living wage of at least ten pounds an hour across the UK, without youth rates or low apprentice rates – and highlight the gap between the real living wage and the government's artificial living wage;
- 7) Support service group pay claims and help them raise participation levels in all UNISON pay related consultations and ballots, using digital technology where appropriate;
- 8) Work with service groups, in light of public spending decisions now made in an Autumn Budget at Westminster, on the timing of their pay claims and campaigns to maximise pressure;
- 9) Link where possible and coordinate such campaigns across sectors and unions through the TUC, STUC, WTUC and ICTU.

National Executive Council

33. Time to Restore Our Living Standards

Conference notes with concern that the living standards of our members have continued to decline over the last year. According to a report by the TUC, workers in the UK are experiencing the worst pay cuts in the 32 OECD economically advanced nations with pay expected fall by a further 0.7% in 2018. We are experiencing the biggest sustained fall in working class living standards since records began in Victorian times.

In the public sector, first a freeze then a cap saw public sector pay rise by just 4.4% between 2010 and 2016 while the cost of living rose by 22%. TUC figures show that many public sector workers earn around £3,000 less a year in real terms today than they did seven years ago. Public sector pay has been slashed by 10% in real terms since 2010 according to some estimates.

Members in Local Government were offered a 2% rise for this year and next which is still a pay cut as it is well below inflation. This offer does nothing to reverse declining

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

living standards. Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt instructed the independent Pay Review Body that it could recommend pay rises above the 1 percent public sector pay cap, but made it clear that any pay increases would be linked to productivity. This could mean NHS staff paying for a pay rise by cuts in unsocial hours or annual leave. NHS staff cannot work any harder!

The weakness of the Tory government led to some wobbling over the pay cap in the run up to the Budget in November but it still remains in place. Conference believes that the continued weakness of the May government makes this an important time to fight over pay. The Tories remain deeply divided over the Brexit and the fallout from their disastrous general election result. The loss of their majority in Parliament means that the government could fall at any time. This would make it harder for them to resist a serious fight over pay. The widespread opposition to continuing austerity means that such a fight can win widespread public support.

Conference welcomes the union's Pay Up Now campaign which is calling for an end to the pay cap, for government money to be made available for an immediate pay rise for all public sector workers and an end to government interference in bargaining arrangements for all public sector pay. Conference vowed last year to end the pay cap in the next twelve months and to coordinate action over pay within and across service groups but this has not happened. We believe that the pay cap will not finally be scrapped and the decline in our members' living standards not reversed without serious and sustained national industrial action.

Conference believes that the Trade Union Act has made it more difficult to win a national ballot industrial action ballot but not impossible if the full resources of the union and its activists are brought to bear. The high turnout and large majority for strike action in the CWU ballot last year proves this to be the case. The PCS also achieved a good turnout in their consultative ballot over pay. UNISON should learn from these examples which included making the ballot a priority for all officials and activists, holding meetings to mobilise, inform and consult activists, workplace rallies and meetings and innovative use of social media to reach all members.

Conference therefore asks Service Groups to consider:

- 1) Coordinating submission of pay claims in the coming twelve months;
- 2) Agreeing joint deadlines for a satisfactory response from employers and pay review bodies where possible;
- 3) Coordinating ballots for strike action within the law and UNISON policy;
- 4) Coordinating any resulting strike action across and within Service Groups within the law and in line with UNISON policy.

Conference further calls on the National Executive Council to work to lead and coordinate a serious joint campaign for decent pay rise for all members in line with the law, UNISON rules and policy and to commit resources as requested by Service Groups.

Birmingham

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority

34. Equal Pay

Conference notes that the average woman in the UK still earns 9.1 per cent less than the average man. This is the lowest the gender pay gap has ever been – in 1997 it was 17.4 per cent – however it is disappointing to note that, despite the Equal Pay Act being introduced over 40 years ago, there is still a persistent pay gap across the public sector. Furthermore, the disproportionate effect on women of ongoing public sector cuts means that there has been very little progress made to narrow the gender pay gap in recent years.

National agreements such as Agenda for Change, the introduction of single status in local government, and the development of national pay bargaining and job evaluation schemes in other sectors, offered real hope that pay inequality could be effectively tackled. However, this is being undermined by employers who fail to undertake local pay and grading reviews or otherwise fail to ensure that national schemes are effective in removing discrimination in pay and terms and conditions. Increased privatisation means that many UNISON members are not covered by national pay bargaining and the equal pay protection that this should offer.

Conference notes that the majority of UNISON members are women, and that equal pay and ending the gender pay gap should remain a key part of our campaigning and organising agendas.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council, working with national Service Group Executives as appropriate, to:

- 1) Ensure branches have up to date and service group specific information and guidance on how to raise equal pay issues with employers;
- 2) Consider organising briefings for branches and activists on equal pay, or invite a speaker on this issue to a future conference;
- 3) Continue to encourage branches to engage with national and regional pay campaigns;
- 4) Continue to promote UNISON's equality agenda with employers and branches.

Greater London Region

Pensions

35. Pension Fund Costs and Charges

Conference notes that the lower the cost of investments of our pension funds the more there will be in the pot to pay our pensions when we retire.

Conference also 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, it was found that:

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 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 the 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.

South Lanarkshire

36. Pension Charges and Transparency

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2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

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City of Edinburgh

Campaigning

Public Services

37. Public Service Champions 2018/19

Conference notes that despite public services being close to breaking point, the Tory government continue to pursue the politics of austerity whilst wilfully disregarding the disastrous impact that their policies have upon the services that UNISON members provide and which our communities rely upon.

At every turn the government has ignored the evidence that not only is cutting jobs and services counter-productive in terms of its effect on the economy and, as a consequence, its own deficit reduction targets, it is also leading to dangerous pressures right across the NHS, local government, education and policing. Examples of the consequences of Tory austerity include:

- 1) The worst winter crisis in the NHS in England in living memory, with tens of thousands of operations cancelled, patients dying in hospital corridors and ambulances queuing outside A&E units;
- 2) Hundreds of thousands of lost jobs in local government that have left children's services, adult social care and homelessness services at tipping point and resulted in councils struggling to keep streets clean and leisure centres and libraries open;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 3) Increased class sizes, reduced curriculum choices and lost teaching and support staff posts in our schools;
- 4) Crime rising at an increasing rate, especially violent and sexual crime, following huge reductions in police staff numbers;
- 5) Community and voluntary sector services close to breaking point, including in social care.

Though cuts are passed on for devolved services in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, there are still political choices to be made and Conference notes that Scottish Local Government, for example, has been disproportionately hard hit by cuts.

Conference further notes that although the government appear determined to plough on regardless of the damage they are causing, those that rely on public services are signalling that enough is enough. After eight years, opinion polls suggest that the public are tired of austerity and that this was a major factor behind the Tories losing their majority at the 2017 General Election.

However, whilst UNISON should see this as grounds for optimism and a welcome sign that its messages about the impact of Tory policies on public services (including through our Public Service Champions campaign) are getting through, there is no room for complacency.

Although the government has no overall majority it is clear that the Tories are determined to cling to power until 2022 and to steer the agenda away from public services. As such it is vital that the union continue to do all that it can to keep public services at the forefront of the public agenda. Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to work with branches, regions, young members, retired members and Self Organised Groups to:

- a) Apply to the General Political Fund to support the public facing Public Service Champions campaign;
- b) Work with public service user groups, communities and other allies to highlight the impact of Tory austerity and cuts;
- c) Undertake research and analysis that highlights the impacts of austerity across the UK and which sets out clear alternatives to rebuild public services and the economy;
- d) Work with Labour Link to take UNISON's alternatives into the Labour Party;
- e) Undertake joint campaigning against austerity with the TUC, the STUC, the WTUC and ICTU.

National Executive Council

38. Keeping public services at the top of the agenda in preparation for a snap election

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference notes that this is a period of significant political uncertainty. The inconclusive result of the last election, the Westminster government's reliance on the support of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and the chaotic EU exit negotiations mean that we could see a snap election at any time over the coming months.

In this context, it is vital that we do everything we can to ensure that public services are at the top of the political agenda and are not squeezed out by other issues. EU exit, important though it is, should not dominate at the expense of all other important issues.

Conference notes that public opinion is now far better disposed towards an alternative to austerity than in earlier periods:

- 1) The level of support for cutting public services to clear the national debt has halved since 2010;
- 2) Two thirds back increased taxes to improve the NHS;
- 3) The number of people who say they are affected by the cuts continues to grow;
- 4) Only one fifth have faith in the government's social care policies.

Conference notes the success of the UNISON Public Service Champions campaign in providing first-hand accounts from our members that tell the real story of austerity to the public.

This is an important tactic if we want to make sure that when people next head to the voting booths the opportunity to kick out Tory austerity is uppermost in their minds.

Conference therefore calls for the National Executive Council to keep the union on a general election footing and to keep campaigning to make sure public services are at the top of the political agenda.

Northumberland Tyne and Wear Health

39. The Crisis in Health and Social Care

Conference is alarmed that our health and social care system faces an unparalleled crisis of under-funding, staff shortages, organisational upheaval and privatisation.

With the country set to celebrate 70 years of the NHS on 5 July 2018, Conference is appalled that our health service is currently embroiled in a crisis made in Westminster.

Conference notes that since 2010 successive UK governments have failed miserably to produce an adequate funding settlement for the NHS – either directly in England or via the Barnett formula in the devolved nations.

Conference is deeply concerned about the impact this is having on patients and services, with the situation coming to a head in the final week of 2017 when a record 16,900 patients were kept in ambulances waiting for hospital care in England. This led to NHS England taking the unprecedented decision to postpone operations until the end of January to relieve pressure in the system, accompanied by a series of

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

non-apologies from the Prime Minister and Health Secretary. Some hospitals in Scotland were also forced to postpone operations over the Christmas period.

Conference notes that there have been increasing reports of widespread rationing of services as the local NHS struggles to make ends meet, and that waiting times have been rising steadily for the past year in most parts of the UK for planned surgery, Accident and Emergency attendance and cancer referrals. The average number of health beds in the EU is 5.2 per 1000 of population, but in the UK is only 2.3. The problem in wealthy country like the UK is not too many patients but too few beds.

Mental health is supposed to be an area that the government is prioritising, yet Conference notes the recent UNISON report, “Struggling to Cope”, which showed the huge pressure on our members working in mental health and the services they provide.

Conference notes government frequently attempts to divert blame for the crisis away from their own cuts – instead blaming patients, staff, managers, the elderly and migrants – all of whom have built our health and social care services since 1948.

Conference asserts that we now have a vicious circle of crisis in social care exacerbating problems for the NHS and vice versa. And Conference is dismayed that the situation is, if anything, even worse in social care. The current government has done nothing to reverse years of chronic underfunding, with the 2017 autumn budget and local government financial settlement offering far too little to close the gap between what the sector needs and what it is getting, further deepening the local authority funding crisis. Recent research published by the British Medical Journal has estimated that there have been 130,000 unnecessary deaths due to service cuts.

As a result, Conference notes that we now have a system where the care needs of large numbers of society’s most vulnerable people are not being met and where far too many care workers are left open to exploitation.

As an example of this, Conference condemns the government’s shameful decision in July 2017 to suspend enforcement action against providers who fail to pay the minimum wage to workers who sleep-in at care homes or their clients’ homes.

Conference notes that the care market remains highly dysfunctional, and continues to be based on a failed commissioning model with inadequate regulation and monitoring. Conference remains deeply concerned by the damaging effects of privatisation and by the government’s repeated failure to tackle non-compliance with the minimum wage in the sector.

Conference notes the alarmingly high levels of staff turnover and vacancy rates in social care and is extremely concerned about the impact on workforce supply (for both health and social care) of the UK’s impending exit from the EU.

Conference is therefore shocked by the government’s lack of urgency in tackling the many problems facing social care, as demonstrated by the ongoing delay in publishing a social care Green Paper, with the Conservatives apparently still reeling from the fall-out of the “dementia tax” debacle at the 2017 general election. And

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference is particularly concerned that the panel of “experts” announced by the government to begin discussions ahead of the Green Paper contains no care worker representatives.

Conference notes that, particularly in England, the health and social care system seems to exist in a state of near-permanent reorganisation. In Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland in spite of the funding difficulties there are serious attempts towards involving staff, unions and patients in a more integrated and planned service.

Conference welcomes attempts to reinstate the importance of strategic planning in the health service and for more of the NHS to be organised on the basis of regional or sub-regional health economies – rather than focusing on individual local providers competing against one another in the open market.

However, Conference is also deeply sceptical about the ability of the NHS to achieve the level of change sought at a time when NHS funding is painfully inadequate, when there is an unseemly rush to move to new structures, and when staff engagement and patient involvement has been patchy at best.

The establishment of Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs) and the potential use of Accountable Care Systems or Accountable Care Organisations remain highly controversial in England, and Conference believes that a flawed implementation of such reforms runs the very real risk that any of the potential benefits will be lost.

Conference continues to support the principles behind health and social care integration, but this should never be used as a means of pushing through cuts, and proper safeguards must be provided for staff on job security, pay, terms and conditions.

Conference further notes that lack of funding increases the likelihood of NHS providers looking for short-term solutions to their financial woes, such as outsourcing and privatisation. This is particularly the case in England, where initiatives such as the Carter review and the Naylor report have encouraged trusts to look increasingly to the private sector.

And Conference is particularly concerned about the growing practice of NHS trusts establishing wholly owned subsidiary companies to provide support services. Under this approach members who are directly employed by the NHS are seeing their jobs and services outsourced to limited companies that are owned by the trusts but no longer part of the NHS.

Contrary to trusts’ claims, Conference does not believe that the use of wholly owned subsidiaries does anything to improve efficiency or productivity; instead it exploits a tax loophole, seeks to undermine pay and pensions, and represents further fragmentation of the NHS.

The collapse of Carillion in January has dramatically exposed the problems of outsourcing and private finance for new hospitals and facilities in the health sector. Conference believes all former Carillion services should be bought back in-house.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to work with the TUC, STUC, WTUC, ICTU and other unions to demand that our health and social care system gets the level of funding needed to deliver comprehensive, safe, high quality services;
- 2) Campaign against any proposals made by STPs or other reorganisations that present dangers to staff, patients or service users;
- 3) Produce guidance and targeted resources to support branches take an organising approach to the changing health and social care landscape;
- 4) Continue to promote UNISON's ethical care and residential care charters by pressing for more councils to sign up to them;
- 5) Campaign for the government to force social care companies to maintain clear minimum wage records and clear and understandable payslips for workers;
- 6) Campaign for regulatory change to oblige social care employers to provide their workers with a statement demonstrating compliance with the minimum wage;
- 7) Work to resist privatisation in all its forms, including by supporting regions and branches in campaigning against the establishment of wholly owned subsidiary companies in the NHS and urging the government to close the tax loophole that is driving this agenda;
- 8) Continue to campaign for social care to be directly delivered by the public sector, paid for by general taxation and both universal and free at the point of need;
- 9) Work with local and national campaign groups to ensure that UNISON remains in touch with those fighting cuts and privatisation in our communities;
- 10) Mark the NHS turning 70 by supporting the Health Campaigns Together demonstration and celebration events on Saturday 30th June 2018.

National Executive Council

40. End Winter Crisis in the NHS

Conference in the winter of 2016/17 the Red Cross called the winter crisis in the NHS a "humanitarian crisis". We all thought that it could not get any worse than that.

The start of winter 2018 has been the worse winter for NHS Trusts since the four hour accident and emergency targets came into force.

Ambulance crews have been unable to decant seriously ill patients from the ambulance trolley to the care of the Accident and Emergency department. We have seen ambulance after ambulance waiting to get into Accident and Emergency.

We have seen Ambulance Trusts unable to get to patients. We have seen patients dying while waiting for ambulances. The amount of pressure that ambulance crews are under just to decant the patient and get on the road to the next patient is extreme, causing, stress, anxiety, depression and staff illness.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

The pressure that hospital staff are finding when ambulance crews are unable to decant patients as this does not just affect ambulance crews it also affects Accident and Emergency staff as well as the wards as pressure is on the staff to discharge patients and to get beds ready for the next patient. The beds do not have chance to get cold before the next patient is in it. This pressure has a knock affect to all staff working in the hospital leading to sickness, staff retention, long term stress and mental health.

Patients are waiting up to 12 hours on trolleys to be seen or have been seen but have to wait for a bed on the ward.

The Secretary for State for Health and Social Care, Jeremy Hunt, has only started to recognise that the NHS has hit crisis point. His answer was to apologise to the public and cancel all elective surgery for the month of January. This was a desperate and last ditch attempt to alleviate pressure, but it did not make one bit of positive difference and only served to make things worse for those patients who got bumped as well as causing a drop in income for the Trusts.

To make the situation even worse, when moral is at its very lowest due to constant organisational change, too few staff and poor wages, it has been stated that NHS staff knew what they were expecting when taking a job in this sector. This is not helped by the number of staff that are leaving and the high numbers of vacancies in most Trusts. We know part of the problem is down to there being insufficient beds in the social care sector; how can we release patients from hospital without having a package of care arranged for them?

By having better facilities for adult social care in the community and paying staff the living wage rather than private care agencies only paying the national minimum wage, providing proper training and investing in staff will help to improve retention, reduce turn over and provide a happier work force. In turn this provides better and more social care to look after our most vulnerable people in our communities.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council:

- 1) To work with the Health Service Group Executive and the Local Government Service Group Executive to lobby government for better funding for the NHS and for Social Care, the poor relation in the caring sector;
- 2) To work with the Health Service Group to lobby government to make sure that there is winter plans in place to prevent ambulances waiting outside Accident and Emergency; making sure there are enough beds in hospitals for patients to be admitted;
- 3) To lobby government for better funding and facilities for social care;
- 4) To work with the Private Contractors National Forum to campaign for better wages, and training for a social care staff most of whom are mainly private sector workers;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 5) To re-launch the social care promotion campaign, highlighting the good work that health care workers in the community provide under very tough working conditions.
- 6) To work with Local Government Service Group Executive by lobbying city councils to look at bringing back council run nursing homes and providing more interim and re-enablement beds especially in the winter where social care need is at its greatest.

North West Anglia Hospitals

41. Social Care

Conference recognises that Social Care is in crisis throughout the UK due to the failure to properly fund the provision of services for an increasing older population. The burden of this crisis is falling on an increasingly stressed social care workforce that is often expected to work long hours, in unsafe conditions for very low wages and on families forced to care for their loved ones without proper support from the social care authorities.

Conference particularly notes the massive exploitation of the predominately female and low paid workforce by the private sector providers whose interest is in making profits rather than providing care to vulnerable people. These companies lower working and care standards as they compete against each other for contracts based on lowering prices and increasing profits. They encourage a continuing race to the bottom which needs to be reversed in order to protect people who use social care services.

Conference recognises the link between improved working conditions and pay with improved care standards.

Conference notes the success of UNISON Scotland's campaign to ensure that all social care workers in Scotland are paid at least the Living Wage and that Fair Work principles must be included when councils are commissioning services.

Conference re-states our policy that care should be provided by staff employed by public authorities who ensure decent pay, training and health and safety for their workforce and quality services for people who rely on these services.

Conference welcomes the growing support for UNISON's Ethical Care Charters which seek to drive up standards within the social care sector.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Step up our campaigns to bring out-sourced social care services back in-house and to reduce the use of private profiteers in social care. This includes asking the Labour Link to campaign to make this policy effective within the Labour Party and all Labour controlled councils;
- 2) Continue to work with branches and Service Group Executives to build support for the Ethical Care and Residential Care Charters;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 3) Publish guidance and provide resources for regions and branches to recruit and organise private sector care workers including using political leverage to influence the commissioning process of councils, ensuring that workers have access to trade unions in their workplace and that employers are required to allow trade unions access for recruitment and organising purposes;
- 4) Campaign for the introduction of sectoral bargaining in the private care sector.

South Lanarkshire

42. NHS Underfunding, Social Care Cuts And The Danger of STPs

Conference condemns the Tory government's continued systematic underfunding of our NHS and social care services with the percentage share of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) devoted to these services having been drastically slashed since 2010 and projected to be subject to further catastrophic cuts by 2020. By that time the percentage of GDP allocated to the NHS is forecast to be a mere 6.6% of GDP with spending on social care set to fall below 1% of GDP. The disastrous effects of these massive funding reductions are already experienced on a daily basis by UNISON members working in the NHS, Local Government and the Community and Voluntary Sector and the negative consequences on the vital services for sick and vulnerable people have been highlighted in many reputable public reports and other social studies. These serious reports and studies have regularly been reinforced by innumerable media reports, most recently exemplified by this year's appalling winter care crisis - which is itself a repeat of similar crises in recent years.

Conference reiterates its opposition to the approach taken by NHS England in establishing 44 randomly defined sub-regional areas to develop Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) involving NHS commissioning groups, NHS providers and Local Authorities being given responsibility for the formulation of plans to integrate health and social care for their particular "footprint" area. Conference expresses further deep concern about the development of Accountable Care Systems (in reality far from accountable!) and their intended platform to become American-style Accountable Care Organisations (ACOs).

Conference also reaffirms its condemnation of the ongoing demand by the Tory Government that STPs need to make a combined saving of £22 billion in England which means that this is inevitably a process of planning for cost reductions rather than developing improved service provision. In addition, Conference reiterates its concern that crucial decisions are being taken with almost no meaningful public scrutiny and without any clear lines of democratic accountability. Furthermore, Conference expresses deep concern about, and opposition to, the way in which the STP process allows private sector providers of healthcare services to be in a position where they can have a significant input into the content of STPs and believes that this is a further deliberate device on the part of the Tory government to reinforce its relentless drive towards an "Americanisation" of the NHS with an abandonment of the NHS's fundamental founding principle of being a service free at the point of demand with an allocation of resources based on genuine need rather than on the ability to pay.

Conference notes that the backcloth of grossly inadequate funding is already resulting in STPs causing deep divisions between local areas and neighbouring

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

communities as to where the deepest cuts should take place and major controversies about where services should be located. The funding crisis is also resulting in increasing difficulties in the recruitment and retention of staff as many professional health and social care workers are increasingly uncertain about the future as well as massively demoralised by an excessive “long hours culture” in which both pay and working conditions have also been progressively eroded.

Conference therefore, calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to campaign to highlight the Tory government’s systematic underfunding of the NHS and social care and to publicise at every opportunity the way in which STPs are being used as a key component in this strategy;
- 2) Step up already existing work aimed at emphasising the impact of this sustained underfunding by central government on both vulnerable service users and on what is a predominantly low paid and mainly female workforce – and to regularly publicise this both inside UNISON by communication with members and also externally through all mainstream and social media outlets;
- 3) Assist branches and regions to oppose all local closures and service reductions whilst continuing to emphasise the root cause as being underfunding by the Tory Government;
- 4) Continue to condemn and expose the lack of transparency in the development of the STP process and press for full involvement by the general public alongside NHS and social care staff in planning future public service provision;
- 5) Call on NHS bodies and councils to use already existing joint working arrangements to promote greater investment and better employment standards in health and social care services;
- 6) Step up UNISON’s efforts to highlight these concerns within the TUC and to encourage regions and branches to raise these issues with regional TUCs and with local trades councils;
- 7) Continue to call on, and work with, UNISON Labour Link to ensure that these issues are taken up within the Labour Party and raised with the Labour Party leadership, Labour MPs and Labour Councillors on a regular basis;
- 8) Continue to work alongside campaigning organisations such as Health Campaigns Together and the People’s Assembly in order to intensify the campaign against the underfunding and privatisation of health and social care services by means of STPs and other related devices;
- 9) Encourage the maximum possible joint working between local branches and the Health, Local Government and Community and Voluntary Sector Service Groups to maximise the effectiveness of the ongoing campaign for adequately funded health and social care services which are publicly owned and under effective democratic control;
- 10) Organise a special one day Health and Social Care Conference with delegates from all Health, Local Government and Community and Voluntary Sector

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Branches to examine in detail all aspects of the ever increasing health and social care crisis and to further develop strategies to combat this.

Isle of Wight

43. Crisis in Health and Social Care

Conference believes there is a serious crisis in health and social care in the UK. This crisis has been developing for a few years and has reached a critical point.

Conference notes that the call for a special National Delegate Conference on Social Care issues has been made almost every year by the South East Region since 2009.

Conference feels strongly that the crisis in social care has not only gone beyond a service-group specific remit and is an issue that affects everyone – it is now totally intertwined with the crisis in health care. Much of the frontline health and social care, home care, day care etc. is now in the community or private sector. Mental health care is now more and more jointly delivered by integrated health and social care teams and accountable care organisations are bringing more and more health and social care services together whilst cutting actual funding levels.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to organise a special one-day delegate conference on ‘the Crisis in Health and Social Care’ to complement and advance the union-wide organising and publicity campaign in defence of publicly owned and democratically controlled, good quality health care, social care and social work services.

*South East Region
Surrey County*

44. Dignity in Social Care, People Before Profit, Building for the Future

Conference notes that over recent years governmental change in regulations regarding Local Authority Respite and Elderly Peoples Care Homes (EPHs) has led to a large number of these facilities being closed throughout the country.

This is mainly due to the lack of Central Government funding required to implement these changes.

In many areas this has resulted in both the staff providing care being made redundant and the service users being forced into more expensive private care.

In more recent years there has emerged a plethora of private care homes, most of which charge exorbitant fees for the minimum amount of care. Many of these provide below minimum conditions both in terms of pay and conditions for their staff and the duty of care to the service users.

The cost of many of these private care home services is prohibitive and many exist only to produce profits for huge multi-national conglomerates. The cost for their services are charged not only to the service users but also to their families, the Local Authorities and Government.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference believes that in order to alleviate the challenges currently facing the NHS in both 'bed-blocking' and the resulting cancellation of thousands of planned operations, there needs to be an immediate investment in the creation of new, purpose built Respite and Elderly Peoples' Homes within Local Authorities. These establishments should be under Local Authority control and their staff employed under UNISON national agreed pay and conditions of service.

Therefore Conference resolves that: as the present Government requires that public sector pension funds are to invest in pool funding, then, as a priority, pool funding should be used initially to provide ethical investment for the purpose of building Respite and Elderly Peoples' Care Homes, which should be run and controlled by Local Authorities. This resolution also includes investment in both Respite and Elderly Care Homes which could be made directly by local pension funds.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to take appropriate action to urge that nominated UNISON representation on pension committees, local pension boards and pool funding groups across the country propose such investment as outlined in this motion as a matter of urgency providing these investment decisions are taken freely in the best interest of the funds' members.

National Retired Members Organisation

45. Housing Affordability is a growing concern for public service workers

Conference recognises that housing is an increasingly significant issue for the workforce in the Eastern Region and nationally, affecting where members can live, what they can access, work life balance and what they can afford.

Government policies have failed to ensure an adequate supply of decent, secure, safe and truly affordable homes that workers and citizens on modest incomes can afford.

Cuts to investment in social rent homes and redirecting investment into the promotion of home-ownership have led to a significant drop in the number of social rented homes built each year. At the same time house price inflation has further restricted access to owner occupation.

In the East of England the following facts show the depth of the housing crisis:

- 1) The average house price in the region is above the national average at £288,000, this means that the average home costs over ten times the average salary. In Cambridge the average home costs £431,344, which is among the highest in the country;
- 2) House prices are rising by as much as 10% a year. The region shows the highest annual growth, compared to the South East and London where prices rose by 8.7% and 7.3% respectively;
- 3) Average rents in the region costs £786 a month;
- 4) One of the main drivers fuelling housing costs in the region is the rise in the number of people purchasing second homes in areas such as Norfolk, yet a

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

majority of these homes are only occupied for a few weeks a year or used as holiday lets.

The high cost of housing is restricting access to suitable, decent and affordable homes. UNISON evidence shows that a majority of our members struggle to find an affordable home near their places of work. The proportion of their incomes used to meet housing costs is rising, at a time when they face real term cuts to their take home pay. Many spend a lot of money and time commuting to work. This is putting a further financial strain on our members' household budgets and eroding their living standards.

With housing costs rising, aspiring to own a home remains an impossible dream for many public service workers. As a consequence, more and more workers on modest incomes now face a lifetime of insecure, expensive private lets due to the shortage of social rent homes at genuinely affordable prices. Young people, older single men and women, the vulnerable, and public service workers on low incomes are increasingly finding themselves priced out of the housing market. For a growing number of people the only option is a shared house or house in multiple occupation (HMO) that evidence shows is often unsuitable, poor quality, unsafe and insecure. This trend is fuelling the unhealthy growth in microflats.

Conference is alarmed that:

- a) The loss of hundreds of thousands of social rent homes through the Right to Buy will significantly be accelerated by the Housing and Planning Act 2016, if plans to sell off higher value council homes to fund the extension of the Right to Buy to housing associations are enforced;
- b) In England the government continues to siphon off capital receipts that could be reinvested to improve council stock;
- c) The promotion of the so called "Affordable Rent Model", under which social rent homes can be converted to misnamed 'affordable rents' at up to 80% of market rates is flawed. It results in fewer homes for low income families when demand is rising. It creates a two-tier rent system whereby new tenants and existing tenants living in similar or identical properties, mainly let by housing associations, pay different rents, as properties tend to be converted to market rents when vacancies arise and people take on new tenancies;
- d) Government plans to phase out life-time tenancies in council housing and replace them with shorter insecure tenancies of two to five years under the Housing and Planning Act 2016 will lead to housing instability and insecure renting with no hope of a secure and stable home where people can plan for their future;
- e) The privatisation of council housing management through schemes such as Large Scale Voluntary Transfers and ALMOs threaten members' pay, terms and conditions and trade union organisation. The evidence shows that stock transfer often results in higher rents and service charges for tenants and increases public spending on housing benefit, it can also erode the democratic and accountable management of the homes tenants live in as well as their rights to influence decisions made by landlords;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- f) The freeze and restrictions on Local Housing Allowance restricts access to the Private Rented Sector. This is creating significant problems for our members living in the Private Rented Sector who rely on the contribution the Local Housing Allowance (housing benefit) makes towards their housing costs, as any increase in rents has to be met from their pay. For our members seeking to find accommodation even in the lower end of the housing market, they can only do so if they can meet the widening gap between the rent charged and the assistance they receive from the Local Housing Allowance;
- g) Welfare cuts are deterring some social landlords to invest in homes to house low income families;
- h) The affordability crisis is putting a major strain on both public service workers and on service delivery. Some public service workers unable to afford high housing costs are moving to live and work elsewhere. As a consequence, public service employers are witnessing staff shortages and a higher turnover of staff, some are struggling to recruit and retain staff.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to work with the Policy Unit, Labour Link and appropriate partner organisations to:

- i) Make the case for a fairer housing deal which ensures that that everyone has access to a decent, safe, secure and affordable home;
- ii) Continue to work with organisations, housing campaigners and trade unions, to campaign for a restoration of direct investment in public housing. A “new generation of council house building” must be supported by public subsidy that supports the capital financing costs and is delivered through a new Housing Revenue Account (HRA) settlement. This will ensure the development of truly affordable homes at social rents accessible to people in low paid employment;
- iii) Campaign for a mass building programme led by councils and housing associations to develop new housing, which meets modern safety, quality, space, energy efficiency and building regulation standards;
- iv) Campaign for a review of council housing finance and a new HRA settlement including an examination of borrowing against HRA assets and the removal of restrictions on the use of capital receipts;
- v) Campaign for a repeal of measures in the Housing and Planning Act which, if enforced, will further deplete the supply of truly affordable homes, remove secure tenancies, increase rents, and accelerate the privatisation of homes to private landlords and investors;
- vi) Campaign to end or halt the Right to Buy across the whole of the UK in line with Scotland and Wales to safeguard the existing social housing stock;
- vii) Work with tenants federations to explore possible models, and the workforce issues that are involved, in enabling council housing to be re-established in areas where stock transfer has taken place and tenants are to have the choice to become council tenants again, reporting to a future conference;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- viii) Campaign for the pay and conditions of social housing workers to be protected;
- ix) Encourage the conversion of higher rent “affordable market rent” properties to “social rent rates” as vacancies arise to ensure that social homes are truly affordable;
- x) Undertake qualitative research across the union to find out the implications of housing costs on our members and on public service delivery and use the evidence to campaign for improvements in housing policy;
- xi) Ensure that the housing needs of vulnerable groups, including the young, adult single men and women, are taken into account of housing policy and that the future housing needs of elderly people who are currently in the latter years of their working lives and living in the Private Rented Sector are planned for.

Conference calls on the government to:

- A) Commit to an annual target of building 100,000 new social rent homes and to provide the necessary public subsidy to enable these homes to be built;
- B) Establish a funded programme to invest in existing social homes to bring them up to a decent standard, ensuring that tenants have access to a safe home in good repair; introduce bold and radical measures to improve regulation in the Private Rented Sector around affordability, security, tenants’ rights and standards; and reform welfare benefits, to ensure that the social security system is fairer, makes work pay and supports the most vulnerable.

Eastern Region

46. Homelessness

Conference recognises the increase in homelessness in recent years. This is most readily seen by the increasing numbers of rough sleepers in all parts of the country. However, the number of people living in over-crowded conditions, ‘couch surfing’ and in inappropriate and often unsafe situations has also increased.

The UK government has no credible homelessness strategy and whilst the numbers of recorded people who were homeless increased in England, Wales and Northern Ireland it has decreased in Scotland. However the levels of homelessness in all areas of the UK are a concern.

Conference recognises that the causes of any individual being homeless can be multi-faceted but believes that Tory government policies have exacerbated the circumstances that contribute to the problem. Welfare reforms, a shortage of adequate and affordable housing, reduced provision of women’s refuges, cuts in mental health services, failures to control escalating rent levels in the private sector and pressures on council budgets are all factors that lead to homelessness.

Conference recognises that this is an issue that affects those UNISON members who work in housing, benefit and homelessness services but that all UNISON members and their families can be directly affected and at risk of homelessness. It is therefore an issue that UNISON must take up.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference calls on the National Executive Committee to:

- 1) Challenge all political parties and interest groups to establish a coherent core policy position to tackle homelessness and to develop a consensus around a national strategy to address homelessness (including rough sleeping) that:
 - a) Considers the structural causes of homelessness;
 - b) Considers homelessness from a health perspective;
 - c) Recognises the impact of welfare reforms on homelessness;
 - d) Ensures cross-departmental consistency in the approach taken;
 - e) Considers placing non-statutory homelessness services on a statutory footing;
 - f) Considers a range of housing solutions including the building of council and other social housing that is affordable for the homeless and low income households;
 - g) Considers funding;
- 2) Continue to call for an end to welfare cuts and to income austerity;
- 3) Support the campaigning organisations that highlight the plight of homeless people and call for an end to rough sleeping.

South Lanarkshire

47. The Housing Crisis and its Effects On Public Sector Workers

Conference notes that cuts to investment in social rented homes and instead promoting of home-ownership options such as shared ownership, starter homes and Help to Buy. This has led to a year on year drastic decline in the social housing sector since 1979.

Despite the rising crisis in housing, since 2010, government investment in social housing (in any sector) has dropped massively and has failed to provide an adequate supply of decent, secure, safe and truly affordable homes that workers and citizens on modest incomes can afford. Local Government workers are amongst the lowest paid part of the public sector so the lack of affordable housing has had a disproportionate effect on our members who often face a lifetime of insecurity, unsafe and expensive private lets with no hope of a secure and stable home. UNISON members in Local Government have found it particularly difficult to afford to live in or nearby where they work. As a result, some employers are witnessing staff shortages, high turnover, retention problems and remaining staff facing rising and unsustainable workloads.

Right to Buy (RTB) has seriously depleted the housing stock available and reduced income streams which in turn has led to more pressure on our members working in this sector both for workloads, pay and working conditions.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

The Housing and Planning Act 2016 (England) will lead to a further depletion of council housing stock, if the regulations are put into effect – such as plans to sell off higher value council homes to fund the extension of RTB to housing associations are enforced. More and more housing associations are now removing themselves from the “social sector” and involving themselves only in the home-ownership options as property developers.

These trends in the social housing sector have caused massive workplace stress and risks at work for UNISON members in housing, as they deal with vulnerable members of the public who have immense housing difficulties. The shrinking of local authority housing workforces has made the jobs of those who remain extremely challenging. In many local authorities, stress is now the top reason housing workers are signed off sick.

Conference condemns the government’s complete failure to commit funding for “essential fire works” in tower blocks following the avoidable Grenfell Tower fire tragedy, which exposes its abject failure to invest in new and existing social homes, and the consequences of the privatisation of key housing jobs. The tragedy is an indictment of failed housing policies, privatisation, outsourcing and a chronic lack of investment in council housing. The government has a duty to provide funding for fire safety improvement and associated improvement works, as without support the cost will fall on councils’ rental incomes and could result in further cutbacks in jobs and services.

Following the Grenfell Tower tragedy, many councils and other providers’ reaction was rightly immediate, but front line housing workers, with little to no staffing resources being made available, undertook the work of inspection, monitoring and follow up works. The result was increase stress, and a massive increase in workloads. This has not abated, and is not likely to in the near future.

Conference calls on the Local Government Service Group Executive to work with the National Executive Council and the Community Service Group Executive to:

- 1) Undertake research across the union to find out the implication of housing costs and affordability on Local Government members, and use the evidence to campaign for improvements in housing policy;
- 2) Campaign for staffing levels which enable housing workers to do their jobs effectively and safely, and continue to campaign against the privatisation of housing jobs;
- 3) Continue to campaign to increase the supply of council housing and lifetime tenancies on true social rents provided by housing associations, and recognise the fact that local government workers have been hit hard by the housing crisis;
- 4) Continue to campaign for a restoration of direct public investment in public housing to enable “a new generation of council house building” and to bring existing social homes up to a decent standard;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 5) Campaign in England, for Housing Revenue Account (HRA) borrowing caps to be abolished and replaced with a new HRA rules to allow councils to fund building of new homes and works to decent home standards from existing RTB receipts;
- 6) Campaign to end the RTB across the whole of the UK to bring in line with Scotland and Wales;
- 7) Campaign for a repeal of measures in the Housing and Planning Act 2016 in order to protect the future of council and social homes in England.

Camden

48. Public Housing Post Grenfell

Conference notes that the Grenfell Tragedy has transformed discussion about the housing crisis. Grenfell was an avoidable tragedy created by more than 30 years of political decisions to cut, deregulate and privatise across housing and public safety which has included:

- 1) Cutting investment in council and social housing;
- 2) Privatising Council Housing stock through stock transfer and Right to Buy;
- 3) Deregulating Housing Associations and promoting mergers into ever bigger businesses;
- 4) Deregulating fire safety control and inspection and controls over planning, design and materials in building;
- 5) Cuts to fire, health, and other emergency services;
- 6) Cuts to local authorities' housing management and maintenance and through undermining trade union and tenant organisation and representation and not listen to tenants.

We recommit ourselves to stand in solidarity with the Grenfell victims. There must be Justice for Grenfell. Those responsible must be held to account. Those who suffered must be rehoused permanently within their chosen community.

Conference further notes that despite proclamations in the immediate aftermath of Grenfell from Tory ministers their policies continue to deepen the housing crisis.

The freeze to Local Housing Allowances (LHA) is making many areas increasingly unaffordable to people on low incomes. Together with Universal Credit and other benefit cuts, this is forcing up homelessness and evictions – termination of a private-renter tenancy is now the most common reason for homeless claims in many areas.

LHA rates have already fallen behind actual rents in nearly 70% of England, according to Shelter research. Families are chasing an ever smaller number of properties at the bottom of the market covered by housing benefit, or are having to make up the difference by cutting back on essential spending elsewhere. The LHA freeze will exacerbate this.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

The controversial and widely-resisted Housing and Planning Act 2016 included further deregulation of housing associations and this is one of the very few measures in the Act which has been implemented.

Of 217,000 homes built in England failed to meet local affordable housing need in 2016-17, according to the Local Government Association (England).

Shelter's investigation, released on 28th September 2017, which raised concerns that housing developers are using viability assessments to escape commitments negotiated with local authorities to build fewer housing association/council homes than initially agreed.

Conference welcomes the many progressive policies being developed by Labour on Housing under Jeremy Corbyn such as:

- a) By the end of the next Parliament, building at least 100,000 council and housing association homes a year for genuinely affordable rent or sale;
- b) Introducing new legal minimum standards to ensure properties are 'fit for human habitation' and empower tenants to take action if their rented homes are sub-standard;
- c) Controls on rent rises, more secure tenancies, landlord licensing and new consumer rights for renters.

Conference believes:

- i) That housing is a basic need and right, and that the housing needs and aspirations of people and communities should have a priority over a market approach;
- ii) Housing Associations must be subject to democratic oversight and regulation;
- iii) Council Housing management and other services should be brought back in house.

Conference resolves to campaign for a comprehensive housing policy that includes:

- A) Building at least one million new council homes;
- B) Retaining full ownership and control of available public land and ensuring brownfield land is made available to councils for council housing development and is not sold or transferred to private developers;
- C) Increasing public investment in existing council and other commonly owned housing to ensure it is decent and safe including full government funding for all fire safety recommendations;
- D) Reinstate and enforce independent fire safety inspection and building regulation;
- E) Reinstating life time tenancies for Council and Social Housing Tenants;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- F) Reversing moves to market rents for Council and Social Housing Tenants;
- G) Suspend the Right to Buy;
- H) Supporting communities by requiring at least 1:1 advance replacement, within the same neighbourhood of council homes sold or demolished under regeneration schemes, with a minimum of 50% of any additional housing for council rents;
- I) A moratorium on estate demolitions without tenants having the right to a ballot;
- J) Regulation of private renting to include controlled rents, secure tenancies and an end to no-fault and retaliatory evictions;
- K) Repeal the Housing & Planning Act 2016;
- L) End the Bedroom Tax and benefit cuts/caps – housing benefit should cover rents;
- M) Working and campaign with our branches, forums, tenant and housing campaigns including Homes for All, Generation Rent, Defend Council Housing, Axe the Housing Act and others, and community groups, councillors and MPs who support this;
- N) Housing Associations must be subject to democratic oversight and regulation;
- O) Landlords must listen to tenants – regulate to ensure recognition and funding of independent tenants and residents associations and federations;
- P) Restore full local, democratic and transparent planning powers;
- Q) All new housing development to include at least 50 per cent really-affordable housing for rent;
- R) Respect the traditions and rights of Gypsies, Travellers and Bargee-dwellers, and provide suitable sites to meet need;
- S) Councils' housing plans and targets must match local need for really-affordable homes for rent;
- T) Trade Union rights for Housing workers.

We call on the Labour Link to work with the Labour Party at every level to pursue these policies.

Greater London Region

49. Public Housing post Grenfell

Conference notes that the Grenfell tragedy has transformed discussion about the housing crisis. Grenfell was an avoidable tragedy created by more than 30 years of political decisions to cut, deregulate and privatise across housing and public safety which has included:

- 1) Cutting investment in council and social housing;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 2) Privatising Council Housing through stock transfer and Right to Buy;
- 3) Deregulating Housing Associations and promoting mergers into ever bigger businesses;
- 4) Deregulating fire safety control and inspection and controls over planning, design and materials in building;
- 5) Cuts to fire, health and other emergency services;
- 6) Cuts to local authorities' housing management and maintenance;
- 7) Undermining trade union and tenant organisation and representation leading to tenants and housing and fire safety workers not being listened to when they have raised concerns.

We recommit ourselves to stand in solidarity with the Grenfell victims. There must be Justice for Grenfell. Those responsible must be held to account. Those who suffered must be rehoused permanently within their chosen community.

Conference further notes that despite proclamations in the immediate aftermath of Grenfell from Tory ministers their policies continue to deepen the housing crisis.

The freeze to Local Housing Allowances (LHA) making London increasingly unaffordable to people on low incomes. Together with Universal Credit and other benefit cuts, this is forcing up homelessness and evictions - termination of a private-renter tenancy is now the most common reason for homeless claims in many areas.

LHA rates have already fallen behind actual rents in nearly 70% of England, according to Shelter research. Families are chasing an ever smaller number of properties at the bottom of the market covered by housing benefit, or are forced to make up the difference by cutting back on essential spending elsewhere. The LHA freeze will exacerbate this.

The controversial and widely-resisted Housing and Planning Act 2016 included deregulation of housing associations and this is one of the very few measures in the Act which has been implemented;

Of 217,000 homes built in England 2016-17 only 2.48% (5,380) were for 'social rent', with only 1,840 of these built by councils.

92% of local authorities in England failed to meet local affordable housing need in 2016-17, according to the Local Government Association (England).

Shelter's investigation, released on 28th September 2017, which raised concerns that housing developers are using viability assessments to escape commitments negotiated with local authorities to build fewer housing association/council homes than initially agreed.

Conference welcomes the many progressive policies being developed by Labour on Housing under Jeremy Corbyn such as:

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- a) Building at least 100,000 council and housing association homes a year for genuinely affordable rent or sale by the end of the next Parliament;
- b) Introducing new legal minimum standards to ensure properties are “fit for human habitation” and empower tenants to take action if their rented homes are sub-standard;
- c) Controls on rent rises, more secure tenancies, landlord licensing and new consumer rights for tenants.

Conference believes that housing is a basic need and right, and that the housing needs and aspirations of people and communities should have priority over a market approach.

Conference resolves to campaign for a comprehensive housing policy that includes:

- i) Building at least one million new council homes;
- ii) Retaining full ownership and control of available public land and ensuring brownfield land is made available to councils for council housing development and is not sold or transferred to private developers;
- iii) Increasing public investment in existing Council and other commonly owned housing to ensure it is safe and decent and safe including full government funding for all fire safety recommendations;
- iv) Reinstate and enforce independent fire safety inspection and building regulation;
- v) Reinstating life time tenancies for Council and social Housing Tenants;
- vi) Reversing moves to market rents for Council and Social Housing tenants;
- vii) Suspend the Right to Buy;
- viii) Supporting communities by requiring at least 1:1 advance replacement, within the same neighbourhood of council homes sold or demolished under regeneration schemes, with a minimum of 50% of any additional housing for council rents;
- ix) A moratorium on estate demolitions without tenants having the right to a ballot;
- x) Regulation of private renting to include controlled rents, secure tenancies and an end to no-fault and retaliatory evictions;
- xi) Repeal the Housing and Planning Act 2016;
- xii) End the Bedroom Tax and benefit cuts/caps – housing benefit should cover rents;
- xiii) Working and campaign with our branches, forums, tenant and housing campaigns including Homes for All, Generation Rent, Defend Council Housing, Axe the Housing Act and others, and community groups, councillors and MPs who support these policies;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- xiv) Housing associations must be subject to democratic oversight and regulation;
- xv) Council housing management and other services should be brought back in house;
- xvi) Landlords must listen to tenants – regulate to ensure recognition and funding of independent tenants and residents associations and federations;
- xvii) Restore full local, democratic and transparent planning powers;
- xviii) All new housing development to include at least 50 per cent really-affordable housing for rent;
- xix) Respect the traditions and rights of Gypsies, Travellers and Bargee-dwellers, and provide suitable sites to meet need;
- xx) Councils' housing plans and targets must match local need for really-affordable homes for rent;
- xxi) Trade Union rights for Housing workers.

We call on the Labour Link to work with the Labour Party at every level to pursue these policies.

Tower Hamlets

50. Justice 4 Grenfell

Conference notes that the Grenfell fire has already killed and injured hundreds, and is continuing to devastate the lives of many more.

In sorrow, UNISON sends its sympathies and offers of practical support.

We demand an end to what has been called "the murderous disregard and contempt for tenants" shown by the landlord in Kensington who ignored warnings from Grenfell Action Group.

Across the country other landlords are ignoring safety warnings from tenants and others - fire safety report on 4,000 blocks are being ignored.

The government has cut funding for major repairs and maintenance, it promotes demolition and describes our homes, estates and communities as 'brownfield sites'. This is the context of the disastrous failure to act on tenants' warnings.

Across the country landlords ignore tenants' warnings, in order to cut costs or avoid works.

We need a full, immediate safety enquiry into Grenfell and every other block. We need full funding for any improvements including sprinkler systems, recommended by fire services and we need to listen to tenants views on redevelopment and warnings about the risks to homes and lives.

We call on Conference to support the following demands:

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 1) Government must pay for removal of all combustible cladding now and clarify;
- 2) We should be informed of which cladding, skirting and rendering is considered as safe. This should include information about any insulating layers that may be placed between the original walls and the facia material;
- 3) A full public fire safety review, including all specifications of works already done;
- 4) Suspend redevelopment works until plans and materials are properly scrutinised;
- 5) Re-instate independent fire safety inspections, with reports publicly available and enforced;
- 6) Yearly reviews of building fire safety with findings should be legally binding for all new builds and all homes for rent;
- 7) Full government funding for all fire safety recommendations on social housing stock;
- 8) Reverse the privatisation of health and safety, building control and materials research;
- 9) Landlords are made to listen enforce a residents right to vote on any redevelopment plans;
- 10) Support the Justice4Grenfell campaign.

Salford City

51. Support the Justice 4 Grenfell Campaign

Conference notes:

- 1) The horrific fire at Grenfell Tower on 14 June 2017 in North Kensington, West London;
- 2) This led to an immense loss of life and was a tragedy that should never have happened as the spread of the fire was entirely preventable.

Conference also notes:

- a) The formation of Justice4Grenfell, independent, community led group established by local people to campaign for justice for all the residents of Grenfell Tower and all those affected by the fire.

The campaign has four explicit aims. They are:

- i) To remember and honour the names and lives of men, women and children who lost their lives in the dreadful fire and the impact of the carnage on survivors and wider community;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- ii) To coordinate information about legal rights, entitlements, hearings, processes and emotional support, including trauma, for those directly affected so that justice can be attained without delay and in an open and transparent manner;
- iii) To develop a public interest campaign to hold all the authorities and individuals to account for their failure to provide safe homes, death of loved ones and lack of proper and effective response during and after the disaster;
- iv) To create a unified community voice on this issue to ensure that the community is properly consulted throughout the whole process; that lessons are learnt to avoid similar events and loss of life ever happening again.

Conference resolves:

- A) To support/affiliate to Justice4Grenfell;
- B) To encourage branches to donate to the Justice4Grenfell campaign.

City Of Glasgow

52. Cuts and the Council

Conference notes the alarming developments at Northamptonshire County Council that culminated in the issuing of a S114 Notice by the S151 officer and that the draft budget includes savings of more than £110m by 2021/22.

Conference further notes that local government has faced the sharpest reduction in central government funding of any public service and in particular Conference notes:

- 1) The steep reduction in local government funding since the beginning of the Conservative – Liberal Democrat coalition Westminster government in 2010, that local government has borne the brunt of ‘austerity’ and that the LGA now estimates a £16bn cut in central government funding in England between 2010/11 and 2019/20;
- 2) That funding reductions are only part of the picture and that further cuts have taken place due to inflation, population growth, increased demand for services, specific additional costs such as the 3.4% increase in employer national insurance contributions and the inadequately funded transfer of functions to local authorities;
- 3) In Wales, the 2018/19 local government finance settlement failed to keep pace with inflation and budget pressures and there is a threat of more adverse settlements during the rest of this Parliament and in Scotland, the 2018/19 settlement continues to follow a sustained downward path of resource availability despite the ending of the council tax freeze;
- 4) That central government spending forecasts for local government remain bleak, with the government’s stated intention of removing Revenue Support Grant and Public Health Grant in England entirely by 2020/21, and that these budget cuts to English authorities will have knock on effects on the available budgets for local government in Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 5) The decision, in England, to increase business rate multipliers by CPI instead of RPI from April 2018 with the potential long term impact on local government finance amounting to a cumulative loss of £78bn over 20 years according to estimates made to the Communities and Local Government Select Committee;
- 6) That the 2015/16 the surplus on the main non-domestic rate account in England (the Government's central share) stood at £1.9bn and is expected to be over £10bn by 2019/20;
- 7) The threat to the future sustainability of local government in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, as potential income growth will not keep pace with budget pressures in many local authorities with the consequent implications for the range of services that local authorities will be able to provide and the number of staff they employ;
- 8) That the LGA and UNISON both argue that the first call on those surpluses should be to meet the financial pressures faced by local authorities.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- a) Raise the profile of local government services and demonstrate that government and local government are simply 'papering over the cracks', and highlighting the impact on and costs to other public services;
- b) Engage with and confront politicians at all levels, including councillors, MPs, AMs, MSPs, and call on them to speak out about the damage that is being done, the gaps that are developing and the financial costs of this;
- c) Campaign for recognition of the need for increased resources needed by local government and schools in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and specifically for, in England, the first call on the central share of business rates to be to address the funding shortfall and for a sustainable future local government finance system that retains an element of central funding;
- d) Work through the TUC and their counterparts in the devolved nations to make the case for increased funding for local government services to influence the outcome of the autumn 2018 Budget.

***Humberside Police
Sheffield Teaching Hospitals
West Yorkshire Transport***

53. Crisis in Local Government

Local Government and local services are at crisis point. Demands and expectations of services are increasing year on year while finances are dwindling.

Local authorities provide the glue that hold society together; either through lifelong education, wellbeing, transportation, refuse or social care to name but a few. Services that every person uses at some point, or all of their lives. Services that are essential to all our lives, providing education for the young or not so young,

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

protecting the vulnerable, young and older, providing safe clean environments and ensuring all have equal access to services and life chances.

These services are at the brink of breaking point, demand and expectation is increasing, yet year on year budgets - to provide these services - are being cut to the bone expecting more for less. It is now getting to the point that services can no longer be provided or that they will be outsourced to try and provide them for less. This only provides a short term saving and invariably leads to increased demand further down the line. With the increase in council tax over the last year, we have seen that the public are now demanding more for their money, demanding an increase in service and more readily complaining when services do not meet their enhanced expectations.

Workers providing services on behalf of local authorities, but employed by third sector employers, either private or voluntary sector, are seeing the amount of work expected of them increase whilst wages and terms and conditions at best stagnate or are cut in order to save money, staff struggling to provide essential services predominantly within the care sector, where demand is increasing and finances falling.

Staff are struggling to cope. Staff that have seen posts lost and services cut, leaving them covering the gaps, working longer and harder on pay that is increasingly falling behind. This all provides the perfect storm for a crisis in local government. Something has to give and, unfortunately, it is often our members paying with their health.

We call on UNISON and our members to stand up for local government, whether employed in local government or not, we all use the services:

- 1) To call on the National Executive Council and UNISON national, regional and branches to coordinate a national, Britain wide campaign, to save local services and local authorities;
- 2) To work within all local authorities to highlight the issues and to campaign locally to begin to address the issues;
- 3) To campaign with MP's, MSP's and Councillors to fight for an increased settlement for local authorities;
- 4) To educate the public on what local government is and what it does for each and every one of us;
- 5) To be proud of the services that local government provides, either directly or indirectly, and say that our services matter and it is time society recognises, values and respects these services, we should no longer sit by and hear criticism of local authorities without building a robust media campaign that promotes the work of local authorities and the essential nature of the wellbeing work carried out.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

We are part of a group of proud local government funded services, and we ask you to say that you value us and the work that we do and are proud to stand up and support us.

Aberdeenshire

54. Staff-less Libraries

Conference is concerned at the growing introduction or attempted introduction of staff-less libraries. No evidence has been provided that shows safety of staff, service user and council property is guaranteed with the installation of Open Libraries Solutions.

Dependence on systems like CCTV will not provide the quick response that would be required in an emergency nor would it prevent the improper use of facilities or ensure the personal safety of those who would use the service out with normal hours.

Conference believes that there are no effective strategies that would:

- 1) Prevent libraries becoming the focus of antisocial behaviour;
- 2) Assist persons who fall ill or are incapacitated during staff-less opening hours;
- 3) Direct the public to safety in the event of a fire or flood;
- 4) Police library premises ensuring the safety of those who were to properly use services out with normal opening hours;
- 5) Give guarantee to the safety of unaccompanied children.

On top of this, evidence from some local authorities shows that Open Libraries Solutions also raises serious issues of equality:

- a) Women are far less likely to enter an unstaffed building;
- b) Physical access is prohibitive to those who are elderly, infirm or with a disability;
- c) For those with learning difficulties it will be a struggle to use the facilities without staff support.

There is also no acknowledgement that a library does not properly function without a well-trained and motivated staff. No self-service terminal or staff-less building can advise and guide young students in their education, help the long-term unemployed back into work and provide a sense of community for the elderly and infirm. UNISON believes local authorities would be better placed investing resources into ensuring the future sustainability of our library services as opposed to simply keeping these buildings open for longer.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to ensure regions and branches are supported in:

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- i) Opposing the introduction of Open Libraries Solutions, highlighting the need for risk assessments and health and safety audits if any such strategies are proposed by councils;
- ii) Highlight the professionalism, dedication and importance of library staff. Making it clear that the safety of library jobs is paramount.

City of Edinburgh

55. The future of the Careers Service and Careers Professionals

Young people should be able to make informed choices before embarking on life changing pathways. Excellent careers information, advice and guidance are all integral to helping young people to make informed choices to achieve their ambitions and to enabling businesses and public services to recruit highly skilled and motivated workforces. A generation of young people have already been let down by patchy careers provision, left to navigate the increasingly complex world of qualifications, providers, further study and work, alone or with minimal support.

Those already in work, or adults looking for work, can access online or precious, but limited, face to face support help with CV writing and interview skills. This varies across the country dependent on where the careers information, advice and guidance is being delivered.

From a Department for Education commissioned survey of 2,000 young people, when asked which individuals young people spoke to in order to help make decisions about what to do after Year 11/13, only 2% identified with an Enterprise Adviser, compared to 40% who spoke to a Careers Adviser at school or college (p.27). Although most young people are willing to access information online, there is strong preference for face-to-face help and support with decision-making.

A parallel DfE report indicated that staff in schools and colleges felt that there were enough tools and resources available but that more personnel were required. Both reports indicate that many young people want greater access to face-to-face careers guidance.

The government's plans, set out in the government Careers Strategy published in December 2017, which sought to improve employment advice failed to offer help to the most disadvantaged and vulnerable young people who have been excluded, are currently being home educated or who are already in work-based training or apprenticeships. Furthermore; it fails to tackle the erosion of the infrastructure, reputation and terms and conditions of Careers Advisers. Staff working in the Careers Service, particularly across England and Wales, have faced redundancies and cuts to their pay and job security. In contrast; the Scottish Government, via Skills Development Scotland, have invested in the Careers Service and in the staff that provide this essential public service.

It is disappointing that the new government strategy does not include any specific measures to ensure greater consistency or investment in the Level 6 route or the Level 7 'Qualification in Career Development' route meaning that young people can benefit from personal guidance from a professionally qualified, independent and impartial careers adviser.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Although the strategy is welcome, it seems to be a series of additional short-term funding initiatives that will do little to address the huge gaps and skills shortages in Britain. It is a missed opportunity to pull together an effective and coherent national careers service that could provide proper independent and impartial guidance by qualified careers professionals working with opportunity providers.

As they stand, the plans appear to add on extra initiatives without properly linking up existing successful projects (e.g. the National Careers Service Inspiration Agenda). Throughout the years, Careers Services in England have been systematically cut hugely by both the Coalition and Conservative Governments. As a result, many people are feeling the effects of being trapped in low-paid jobs, saddled with student debt, missing out on education and/or learning new skills.

The international evidence-base is clear – career guidance is a key ingredient in successful economies. Only an effective national all-age careers service can address and reverse this negative. Over the next 12 months, the Government has promised to review progress and data will be gathered. UNISON would like participate and contribute to this review.

UNISON will continue to press the government on the need for action. The proposal for tailored advice at the heart of the new Government strategy cannot be delivered by teachers, volunteer Enterprise Advisers and employers alone. We recognise that teachers and employers have vital roles to play. However they have to be complemented by access to informed and impartial careers advice as well as guidance from a qualified Careers Adviser.

A coherent, consistent and robust Careers Service should support those people who are currently most disadvantaged and who want to use a career to improve their life opportunities. A model to follow is that currently in place in Scotland; provided by Skills Development Scotland who work across the country in schools, colleges, careers centres and partner organisations. There are clear career pathways and investment in the Skills Development Scotland workforce.

UNISON is calling for:

- 1) A universal careers service delivering impartial information, advice and guidance for all students and workers, regardless of age;
- 2) A properly resourced careers service, with a stable funding system;
- 3) A service staffed and delivered by qualified careers professionals with the necessary expertise to provide young people with information about a range of different options;
- 4) Face to face support and guidance for young people.

UNISON recommends that the Local Government Service campaigns on the above issues with the appropriate government bodies and key stakeholders.

Hertfordshire

56. Higher Education as a Public Service

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference notes 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 £9,250 at the vast majority of institutions and universities are forced to develop marketing strategies to compete for students, who are seen as customers buying degrees as a product.

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 accounts and ultimately extract profits from future generations of graduates, as if young people don't have enough to worry about.

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.

The proposed review of higher education funding, in the hands of such a reactionary government, will inevitably mean an attack on our members' jobs in particular and education as a public service in general.

The trade union movement has a responsibility to defend higher education as a public service and the workers providing and supporting it.

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.

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:

- 1) Be loud and clear in campaigning for free and properly funded education at all levels and for all ages;
- 2) Identify and implement a strategy to make free education a major theme of UNISON's political campaigning, with particular reference to recruiting young workers and students into the trade union movement.

University of Brighton

57. UK Emergency Services Cuts - The need for greater coordination

In January this year the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service announced a proposed 20% wage increase for fire fighters but with strings attached - the role would be transformed to allow fire fighters to respond to terrorist and medical emergencies.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

In England and Wales we have witnessed plans to train Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) as retained fire fighters. Our Police and Fire services further describe how increasingly they are delivering the first responder role of ambulance crews who are overstretched and thin on the ground.

We witness oversight bodies and elected representatives attempt to mitigate the ravages of brutal budget cuts by transforming functions and integrating job roles in increasingly centralised catchment areas. Such radical reform is often called service modernisation or sold as making the services more flexible, efficient and responsive.

North and South of the border, county to county we see a disparate and incoherent approach to 'modernisation' and how we address the financial constraints exacerbated by austerity on our emergency services.

The cuts agenda appear to be the leading justification for greater amalgamation of our emergency services and our collective job roles but at what risk to our members and the wider public?

Conference calls:

- 1) For greater collaboration and coordination with our emergency services sister trade unions;
- 2) On the National Executive Council to commission a review into the impacts of service amalgamation on emergency services and job roles.

Police Staff Scotland

58. Energy Renationalisation

Conference notes that we all rely on the production of energy as an essential public service and that UNISON is the largest staff trade union in the energy sector and has many thousands of members working in customer and retail operations in the big six energy suppliers.

Conference further notes that this union is proud of its members who work in the energy sector and recognises the services they provide to customers day in and day out.

However, Conference is obliged to note that due to the inadequate way the energy market operates in the UK, including excessive profits in the past and uncompetitive deals, millions of customers are switching accounts often away from the big six to smaller suppliers many of whom have no trade union recognition and treat staff poorly. This flight from the big six is putting UNISON members' jobs at a very real risk and in the long term without some intervention could decimate our overall energy sector membership.

We must recognise that the political landscape has significantly changed in the past two years for the better with a revitalised Labour Party promoting again the notion of public ownership and renationalisation as a means to addressing failing markets and the inadequacy of the privatised utility companies. This is to be welcomed.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

However, at the last General Election the Labour Party manifesto committed only to renationalising energy networks, distribution and transmission while at the same time creating new regional public sector energy retailers to compete against the big six, other private companies and municipal energy companies.

This would have led to even more job losses and high levels of anxiety for members in areas in which UNISON is strongly represented. This is not acceptable to Conference.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Engage with UNISON Labour Link to influence the Labour Party to promote the need to renationalise the customer and retail operations of the big energy suppliers to protect member's employment and improve the service;
- 2) Work with the General Political Fund to develop a strong rationale for this proposition to ensure a strong case is made to all political parties;
- 3) Work with the energy service group to ensure that the jobs, pay and conditions and pensions of members in energy are protected during any future renationalisation programme in the energy sector;
- 4) To work with the wider union and Labour Link to promote renationalisation along the lines this motion supports, and the very clear benefits to all concerned by such a move.

National Grid Energy

Privatisation

59. Privatisation and PFI – Building the Campaign

Conference notes:

- 1) UNISON's sustained opposition to privatisation and the private finance initiative for more than two decades;
- 2) The positive role played by UNISON in securing the motions opposing PFI at the labour party conferences in 2001 and 2002 as UNISON demonstrated the negative impact of such schemes; highlighting that PFI contractors were cutting the pay, pensions, sick pay, maternity pay of NHS porters, catering staff, facilities staff, security staff, and cleaners who had been forcibly transferred to them as the price of building a new hospital;
- 3) The Workforce Protection Codes and a secondment model for NHS PFI staff developed by Labour were subsequently abolished by the coalition government in 2010;
- 4) The campaign across public services against privatisation and the 'two-tier' workforce which have seen greater success in Wales with a Welsh Labour Government;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 5) The mounting evidence showing the deficiencies of privatisation and that the Private Finance Initiative is the costliest form of contracting;
- 6) The support the General Political Fund has given to “We Own It” campaign to promote public ownership.

Conference recognises that the extent of privatisation and PFI schemes is different within the devolved nations.

For example, as at October 2007, a decade ago, the total capital value of PFI contracts signed across all public services was £56.9 billion. Of this, just £618m was in Wales, or £213 per head. This compares to £50 billion in England (or £1,017 per head), £5.2 billion in Scotland (£1,028 per head) and £1.1 billion in Northern Ireland (£631.4 per head).

Nevertheless UNISON branches continue to be faced with proposals that privatise public services or that are informed by business cases that are underpinned by assumptions about cuts to terms and conditions of new employees and reduced pension entitlement.

Conference believes that the National Audit Office (NAO) report into PFI and PF2 (January 2018) amounts is nothing less than a scathing indictment of a policy introduced in 1992 by Norman Lamont, Tory Minister and sadly continued by the subsequent Labour UK government, confirming the concerns raised by UNISON for more than 20 years.

In particular conference notes the NAO findings:

- a) That after more than 20 years of PFI ‘There is still a lack of data available on the benefits of private finance procurement’;
- b) The NAO found no evidence that PFI delivers operational efficiency – ‘Our work on PFI hospitals found no evidence of operational efficiency: the costs of services in the samples we analysed were similar’;
- c) Costs were the same or higher – ‘Departments who responded to our 2017 survey question considered that operational costs were either similar or higher under PFI’;
- d) PFI is a fiscal illusion – ‘The Office for Budget Responsibility’s (OBR’s) July 2017 fiscal risks report cited the use of off-balance sheet vehicles like PFI as an example of a “fiscal illusion”. PFI can be attractive to government as recorded levels of debt will be lower over the short to medium term (five years ahead) even if it costs significantly more over the full term of a 25–30 year contract’;
- e) PFI adds extra costs – ‘Private finance procurement results in additional costs compared to publicly financed procurement, the most visible being the higher cost of finance.... some 2013 deals, agreed when credit market conditions were poor, projected an annual return for debt and equity investors of over 8%; this was more than 5% higher than the cost of government borrowing at the time’;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- f) PFI can add even more costs - 'There are other areas where the private finance model can result in additional costs and also ways in which it differs to the approach HM Treasury would usually recommend. These include: Insurance, Cash management, Costs of external advisers, Fees to lenders and SPV management and administration fees';
- g) Publicly financed alternatives cost less – 'The higher cost of finance, combined with these other costs, means that overall cash spending on PFI and PF2 projects is higher than publicly financed alternatives';
- h) Inflexibility is a drawback – 'In our 2017 survey departments reported that operational inflexibility was a drawback of PFI'.

Conference further believes:

- i) That in the wake of the revelations following the liquidation of Carillion it is time to reassert the need for the public service ethos in the delivery of public services. It is over twenty years since the Nolan Committee published the seven principles of public life – selflessness; integrity; accountability; openness; honesty; objectivity and leadership. We now need an equivalent set of principles that will apply to any private company, its management and directors, that receives public money to deliver public services;
- ii) Selflessness and integrity means there can be no place for companies using tax havens, and the framework for boardroom pay must incorporate a public service ethos and require full disclosure;
- iii) Integrity also means that there can be no place for companies involved in blacklisting workers, as Carillion admitted (an unlawful act in Wales introduced by a Welsh Labour Government); or those that seek to undermine workers bargaining rights, generate profits by attacking pay and terms and conditions, and forcibly turn over the workforce to cut pension entitlements;
- iv) The principles of accountability and openness require full transparency with all procurement information available online, including tender documentation, bids and all signed and amended contracts. Freedom of information requirements would be written into contracts alongside the open book accounting called for by the National Audit Office;
- v) The quality of the service would be critical, and when failure occurs procurement frameworks would ensure speedy intervention preventing situations such as those at the Great Western Hospital Trust in Swindon which in 2014 reported that, "Concerns about food hygiene and cleanliness, have posed a potential risk to patients, visitors and staff", but the Trust was powerless to intervene as "Carillion were contracted to provide these services by Semperian - effectively the 'owners' of the building under the PFI agreement";
- vi) The principle of honesty requires propriety is both rigorous and demonstrable;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- vii) If companies delivering public services are to fulfill the principles of objectivity and leadership they must be at the forefront when it comes to equality and sustainability and that;
- viii) The primary motivation for the provision of services must be the public interest, not the pursuance of profit.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council:

- A) To work with the TUC, STUC and WTUC, political parties and civil society organisations for a complete rethink of outsourcing and PFI, for a root and branch review, for a Doomsday Book of significant contracts (at national and local level) and for the evaluation of performance across the plethora of contracts that an individual company may hold, for in-house provision to be the default option for public services and for new criteria for decisions by public bodies, writing into contracts Freedom of Information requirements, involvement of public and staff, transparent reporting of profit, labour and living wage clauses, union recognition, compliance with fair tax and boardroom remuneration;
- B) To continue to oppose privatisation and PFI and to highlight the deficiencies and how the public interest becomes secondary to meeting PFI obligations;
- C) To highlight the role of debt and financial engineering in company structures and privatisation, for example in the provision of social care;
- D) To highlight the work of the trade unions and the governments in the devolved nations, including the Welsh Assembly Government in delivering services in-house;
- E) To work with the TUC, STUC and WTUC, political parties and civil society organisations to create a modern model for public sector delivery of public services, for service quality and efficiency, for skill development and capacity building within the public sector to ensure that there is a public sector alternative for the construction and delivery of public services.

Cymru/Wales Region

60. Campaigning For an End To Public Sector Privatisation

Conference asks UNISON Labour Link at all levels to call on the Labour Party to press ahead with and extend the plans in its ground breaking manifesto to attack the privatisation that is siphoning off profits from the public purse and sucking vital funds out of our under resourced public services.

Not only are these companies a terrible deal for the tax-payer, but they hide their dreadful business practices behind off-balance sheet accounting and fictional asset valuations which allow them to privatise their profits while leaving all of the risk firmly in the hands of the public sector. Official government figures suggest that the UK has been left with debts of approximately £200 billion towards these projects, stretching far into the future, and acknowledges that they can be up to 40% more expensive than public projects.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

The privatisation agenda has been a disaster for the taxpayer and for our public sector and therefore Conference:

- 1) Fully endorses the calls for a windfall tax on the outsourcing conglomerates to claw back the excessive profits that have been stripped from vital services and call for this to be implemented as a matter of urgency by the next Labour administration;
- 2) Calls on the Labour Party to bring back into the public sector all contracts when they come up for renegotiation, and to go much further and end contracts where costs spiral, profits soar and services are hollowed out;
- 3) Calls for bonuses paid to the directors of failed outsourcing companies to be clawed back and re-invested in our vital public services;
- 4) Endorses Labour's plan to end the PFI rip off, put an end to the private-profit-is-best dogma and run our public services for the benefit of the many, not the profits of the few.

Manchester

61. PFI windfall profits tax

Conference notes that UNISON was the first trade union to oppose the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) in the 1990s and the UNISON motion opposing PFI at the 2001 and 2002 Labour Party Conferences was successfully carried calling for an urgent review.

Conference welcomes the recent commitment by the Labour Party not to enter into new PFI schemes, to review existing PFI schemes and to enshrine the rights of staff to have rights kept or enhanced to comparable public sector standards on transfer to public sector bodies when a Labour Government is elected at Westminster.

Conference further notes the damning National Audit Office report on PFI and PF2, the liquidation of Carillion and the evidence that the ownership of PFI schemes is becoming more concentrated, is increasingly located in offshore tax arrangements and that those companies are benefitting from new windfall gains as a result of the cut in Corporation Tax.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to support, as an interim measure, the proposal for a windfall tax on PFI companies to recoup the tax income that was assumed in the original PFI tender documents and also to work constructively with the Labour Party on the review of existing PFI schemes and the framework for protecting and enhancing pay, terms and conditions and pension entitlements when individual PFI schemes are returned to the public sector.

North West Anglia Hospitals

62. Abolish PFI – Renationalisation now!

The 2018 National Audit Office Report on PFI and the collapse of Carillion have highlighted once again the negative impact privatisation has had on public services.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

The NAO report showed that £200 Billion will be handed over to contractors such as Carillion in over 700 PFI deals for the next 25 years. The costs to the taxpayer can be up to 40% higher than publicly funded schemes.

The PFI bill has now reached a staggering £10.3 billion a year indexed linked to inflation.

Conference believes this scandalous waste of taxpayers' money should not be allowed to continue.

The Carillion debacle where 1000's of workers have lost their jobs while their bosses dished out lavish bonuses to themselves has proved beyond all doubt that the taxpayer is always forced to pick up the pieces when the privateers fail in their obligations and cannot deliver a profit to their shareholders.

The Tory government, which has proved unable and unwilling to take action against this corporate fleecing of public finances, has always taken the side of big business and never for the workers losing their jobs.

Conference welcomes the Labour Party's change in policy on PFI. We agree with John McDonnell who said: "The scandal of the Private Finance Initiative has resulted in huge long-term costs for taxpayers while providing enormous profits for some companies." "Never again will this waste of taxpayer money be used to subsidise the profits of shareholders, often based in offshore tax havens." "We have already pledged there will be no new PFI deals signed by us in government. But we will go further. It is what you have been calling for. We will bring existing PFI contracts back in-house."

Conference believes there has never been a better time to campaign for the renationalisation, of the PFI schemes and for the money saved to be invested in our public services.

To quote Jeremy Corbyn: "These corporations need to be shown the door. We need our public services provided by public employees with a public service ethos and a strong public oversight."

Mid Yorkshire Health

63. All Public Services Brought Back into Public Control

Conference believes that the myth that privatisation of public services improves efficiency has finally been exposed as being completely false. The collapse of Carillion, the scare regarding Capita and the two successive failures of the East Coast rail franchise have resulted in massive public concern about privatisation and illustrated that the primary objective of this political philosophy was to generate profits for private companies and never had much to do with improving public services.

The utility companies which were amongst the first privatisations are generally seen as providing expensive energy to the public to make ever more profit for shareholders. Since 1979, successive Conservative and Labour Governments have continued to promote privatisation despite much scepticism amongst the electorate

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

and key services like education and health are now encumbered with massive Private Finance Initiative (PFI) debts which we, the public, have to pay for to finance.

The Labour Party's manifesto before the last general election proved to be popular with the electorate, especially the pledges to bring services back into public ownership. With 60% of Conservative voters now believing that the railways should be nationalised the time is right for mounting a major campaign to see all public services brought back into public control.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to mount a vigorous national campaign calling for all services privatised since the first Thatcher government, to be brought back under public control, including privatisations resulting from PFI schemes.

Leeds

64. Public Service Mutuels: A Form of Privatisation

Conference notes with alarm that the government has been privatising public services to Public Service Mutuels (PSMs) in its attempt to reduce the size of the state.

Conference notes that PSMs claim to be about employee ownership, but in reality are minority-controlled by the staff they are supposed to empower. A high-profile example is 'MyCSP'. Hailed as a success story by the Conservative government, MyCSP is the privatised Civil Service Pension Scheme service, who administers pensions on behalf of MPs, judges and civil servants in the UK. Only 25% of the company is owned by the employees, 24% by HM Government and 51% - the controlling stake – by a private equity company called Equiniti.

Conference believes that the development of PSMs is dangerous because:

- 1) They are a form of privatisation, as ownership is transferred from the state to private interests;
- 2) They have to compete for contracts after three years, as the incubation period of spin-outs is limited to three years as defined by the EU Public Contracts Directive (2014/24/EU);
- 3) They will be taken over by larger private companies over time, thereby losing their public-sector ethos;
- 4) They will have to compete in a "race-to-the-bottom" on terms and conditions of employees;
- 5) They are constrained to bid for contracts which are limited in value due to the Government-imposed austerity agenda.

Conference notes with regret that some in the Co-op movement have been supportive of PSMs as a way of creating income streams for consultants and social enterprises.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to make clear to the Co-operative movement via all available channels:

- a) That UNISON does not support the privatisation of public services to co-operatives, mutuals or social enterprises;
- b) That UNISON rejects the spinning-out of in-house services in any sector to PSMs and reaffirms our commitment to in-house service delivery;
- c) That attempts by some to promote PSMs risk a permanent split between the trade union and co-operative movements that have successfully worked in solidarity since the 19th Century.

Conference also calls on the National Executive Council to:

- i) Advise and reaffirm to all branches and regions of UNISON's opposition to PSMs.

North West Region

Campaigns

65. Treating Terminally Ill People with Dignity in the Benefit System

Conference notes that historically benefits such as Disability Living Allowance had an automatic provision from the payment of benefit to those people who have less than 6 months to live. These "special cases" required confirmation of their illness and their prognosis from their doctor on the form DS1500 and did not require the signature of the patient.

However, with the introduction of Universal Credit, whilst the DS1500 process is still officially in place it appears that the practise of the Department of Work and Pensions is to deal with terminally ill claimants in exactly the same way as they deal with all other claimants.

In December 2017, the Highland Citizens Advice Bureau and Drew Henry MP reported on their experience of being one of the pilot areas for Universal Credit. They reported that the time for obtaining benefit for terminally ill people had increased from eight days to at least 35 days. However, more worrying are the reports that those claiming Universal Credit whilst terminally ill are now being expected to undergo Work Capability Assessments and Work Focused Interviews.

Conference believes that this is unacceptable and needs to stop.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to condemn this practise and the inhumane treatment of terminally ill people and to campaign to end this practise.

Lanarkshire Health

66. Campaign for Asylum Seekers Right to Work in the UK

Conference notes :

- 1) We are now witnessing the highest levels of displacement on record. An unprecedented 65.6 million people around the world have been uprooted from

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

their homes by war and environmental catastrophes. Among them are nearly 22.5 million refugees, over half of whom are under the age of 18;

- 2) 80% of the refugees remain within their country of origin or in neighbouring ones such as in the Middle East from the Syrian/Iraq conflict and in Burma where Rohingya refugees have had to fled to Bangladesh;
- 3) The refugees who reach Britain usually find themselves in dire circumstances. It often takes many years for asylum seekers to be accepted by the system as refugees. They have to go through different screening and interviews for their cases to be heard. Most of these have inadequate language translators and lack of opportunities for the individuals to explain their cases;
- 4) In the UK, refugees are a denied the right to work and are forced to live on a bare minimum of £5 per day to pay for their basics such as clothing, food, drinks, transport. Most asylum seekers are living in poverty and experience poor health and hunger. Many families are not able to pay for their basic needs;
- 5) This includes thousands of children seeking asylum in the UK, who are being denied access to education, according to organisations who work with refugees. There is no legal requirement for local authorities to provide education for children waiting for dispersal from initial accommodation by the Home Office.

Conference further notes:

- a) The UK is the only country in Europe that does not have a limit on the length of time that someone can be detained. There are individuals in detention centres who have been detained for years that are still not given the results of their case;
- b) In the UK, asylum seekers are encouraged to work within the detention centre for £1 an hour yet they are not allowed to work when they are outside and are forced to look for alternative ways to earn some money to live on. This makes them vulnerable to be exploited by bosses who employ them illegally on slave wages, some on as little as £3 per hour;
- c) The vast majority of these exploited workers are outside of the organised trade unions movement;
- d) Until a decision is made the lives of asylum seekers are left in a limbo.

Conference recognises the roles by refugees/asylum campaigns - in highlighting the issues on how refugees are treated while waiting for the outcome of their individual cases and further notes:

- i) The Refugee Rights campaign was set up by refugee who have decided to come together to organise, campaign and fight for their rights;
- ii) This campaign has participated in national demonstration including the ones on UN International Anti-Racism day, United for Education demo, May Day demo as well as numerous protest including for the closure of Yarls Wood detention centre;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- iii) Refugee Rights organises free law clinic with legal representation and provides free advice and access to information;
- iv) Refugee Rights campaign on key issues such as:
 - A) The right to work and join a trade union;
 - B) Access to education;
 - C) The closure of detention centres;
 - D) £10 an hour now;
 - E) An NHS free for all;
 - F) Language and adequate medical help – including mental health facilities – for asylum seekers and refugees.

Conference demands that asylum seekers must not be treated as criminals or unlawfully held in detention centres. Their fundamental human rights need to be defended.

Conference supports the demand to allow the right to work for all asylum seekers/refugees.

Conference agrees to affiliate to the Refugee Rights campaign in line with UNISON's criteria covering affiliations.

NHS Logistics

67. For Asylum Seekers Right to Work

Conference notes:

- 1) We are now witnessing the highest levels of displacement on record. An unprecedented 65.6 million people around the world have been uprooted from their homes by war and environmental catastrophes. Among them are nearly 22.5 million refugees, over half of whom are under the age of 18;
- 2) 80% of the refugees remain within their country of origin or in neighbouring ones;
- 3) Those refugees who reach Britain usually find themselves in dire circumstances. It often takes many years for asylum seekers to be accepted by the system as refugees. They have to go through different screening and interviews for their cases to be heard. Most of these have inadequate language translators and lack of opportunities for the individuals to explain their cases;
- 4) They are also denied the right to work and are forced to live on a bare minimum of £5 per day to pay for their basics such as clothing, food, drinks, transport. Most asylum seekers are living in poverty and experience poor health and hunger. Many families are not able to pay for their basic needs;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 5) Thousands of children seeking asylum in the UK are being denied access to education, according to organisations who work with refugees. There is no legal requirement for local authorities to provide education for children waiting for dispersal from initial accommodation by the Home Office. Adult education facilities are restricted to certain fields only;
- 6) No advice is given on what health care maybe available and the lack of such of information means that some asylum seekers are made to pay for treatment;
- 7) The UK is the only country in Europe that does not have a limit on the length of time that someone can be detained. There are individuals in detention centres who have been detained for years that are still not given the results of their case;
- 8) In the UK, asylum seekers are encouraged to work within the detention centre for £1 an hour yet they are not allowed to work when they are outside and are forced to look for alternative ways to earn some money to live on. This makes them vulnerable to be exploited by bosses who employ them illegally on slave wages, some on as little as £3 per hour;
- 9) The vast majority of these exploited workers are outside of the organised trade unions movement;
- 10) Until a decision is made the lives of asylum seekers are left in a limbo.

Conference further notes:

- a) The Refugee Rights campaign was set up by refugee who have decided to come together to organise, campaign and fight for their rights;
- b) This campaign has participated in national demonstration including the ones on UN International Anti-Racism day, United for Education demo, May Day demo as well as numerous protest including for the closure of Yarl's Wood detention centre;
- c) Refugee Rights organises free law clinic with legal representation and provides free advice and access to information.

Refugee Rights campaign calls for:

- i) The right to work;
- ii) Access to education;
- iii) The closure of detention centres;
- iv) £10 an hour minimum wage now;
- v) An NHS free for all;
- vi) Language and adequate medical help – including mental health facilities –for asylum seekers and refugees;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

vii) The right to join a trade union

Conference demands that asylum seekers must not be treated as criminals or unlawfully held in detention centres. Their fundamental human rights need to be defended.

Conference supports the demand to allow the right to work for all asylum seekers/refugees.

Conference agrees to affiliate to the Refugee Rights campaign

Southwark

68. Stop and report human trafficking in our cities and towns

The growth in human trafficking has increased significantly in recent years.

We need to highlight to our members that this occurs not only in the major towns and cities.

A recent report highlighted 27 places in Scotland where there have been reports of this illegal trade. Paisley, where our branch is based, is one of these towns.

The exploitation and victimisation of adults and children, being traded and exploited for the gain of others, is being perpetrated by criminal gangs. These victims are forced to work as servants in nail bars, car washes, construction sites and so on.

Conference resolves to:

- 1) Highlight this issue to our members who should be vigilant and report suspected human trafficking to the authorities;
- 2) If services offered in our communities sound too good, too cheap and have no invoices - we need to stop, think and report.

Doing nothing is not an option.

Renfrewshire

69. End period poverty

Conference believes that everyone who is menstruating should have the ability to access sanitary products for free. For too long menstruation has been a taboo subject and girls and women unable to afford such products have had to resort to unsuitable and unsafe ways of managing their periods. This needs to end.

Conference welcomes Monica Lennon, MP's Bill in the Scottish Parliament, designed to ensure a universal right of access to free sanitary products for everyone in Scotland, in addition to specifically introducing a duty on schools, colleges and universities to freely provide these products in their toilets.

We believe that it is especially important for school children to have access to sanitary products without having to go and ask for it. At present girls can miss out on education during their periods if they do not have access to suitable sanitary wear.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Whilst schools do carry sanitary products, girls very often need to go and ask for these. Many find this embarrassing and are also reluctant to ask repeatedly. Free and available sanitary products including menstrual cups, would ensure that these girls are not disadvantaged and are treated in schools with dignity and respect.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with Labour Link to support Monica Lennon's Bill and to lobby the UK and devolved governments to make sanitary wear more accessible in schools and the community to all girls and women who are menstruating, by providing these products in girls' and unisex toilets in schools and in the wider community. As part of this menstrual cups should be considered as these are a one-off cost and are more environmentally friendly;
- 2) Call on all branches to support the call for free and accessible sanitary wear for all women and girls to end period poverty and to campaign in their local areas including lobbying, where appropriate their public service employers to this end.

Aberdeenshire

70. 'The Total Eclipse of the S_N Campaign

Conference notes the Motion passed by delegates to this Conference last year that deplored the racist comments made in April 2017 by Sun columnist Kelvin McKenzie about Everton FC midfielder Ross Barkley. The motion noted that further comments made in the same column were derogatory about the city and people of Liverpool. These comments were made just days before the 28th anniversary of the Hillsborough disaster. Conference noted the appalling and hurtful coverage of the 1989 Hillsborough Football disaster by this same newspaper. The editor at the time was Kelvin McKenzie.

Conference applauds Liverpool FC and Everton FC for refusing Sun journalists access to their respective premises. We also applaud Liverpool City Mayor Joe Anderson for reporting McKenzie's comments as a race hate crime.

Conference reaffirms its commitment to opposing and standing up to racism and all other forms of bigotry and hatred.

We will not tolerate the politics of hate or allow them to go unchallenged. Conference therefore agrees to:

- 1) Advise delegates that copies of the Sun newspaper will not be welcome in any UNISON buildings, meetings, conferences or events;
- 2) Refuse access to Sun journalists to UNISON conferences and to any UNISON premises;
- 3) Ensure UNISON does not advertise in the Sun newspaper;
- 4) Encourage branches to support the Total Eclipse of the S_N? campaign.
- 5) Call upon National Executive Council and National Labour Link to consider submitting a similar motion to the TUC and Labour Party Conferences.

2018 National Delegate Conference

UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

*Knowsley
Sefton*

71. Working Together with Campaign Groups

Conference notes the growing evidence of public dissatisfaction with austerity policies and welcomes the growing public appetite for radical change.

Conference believes that it is important that UNISON is seen in our communities as a force for good and as an ally to those who are experiencing and resisting austerity. Conference welcomes the involvement of UNISON activists, branches and regions in community initiatives such as Citizens UK and the Living Wage Campaign; in environmental campaigns such as Frack Off; and in anti-cuts campaigns that focus on issues including service closures and welfare cuts.

Conference acknowledges the key role played by the People's Assembly and Health Campaigns Together in organising high-profile events that have given the public opportunities to demonstrate their opposition to the policies of the Conservative government.

Conference believes that support from community groups and faith groups can bolster UNISON campaigns. For example, in Greater Manchester, UNISON has worked through and with GM Citizens in promoting our social care organising campaign Care Workers for Change.

Conference believes that working with community organisations – that often lack formal democratic structures and clear lines of accountability – presents us with challenges but also with considerable opportunities. Conference believes that we should welcome the growth of a vibrant anti-austerity community politics, and that we need to support it and be a part of it.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) In accordance with union rules, encourage the involvement of UNISON members, activists, branches and regions with organisations that share our values and aims;
- 2) Help facilitate good working arrangements between such organisations and UNISON at all levels.

Salford City

72. Democratic Socialism

Free market capitalism is responsible for world-wide programmes of privatisation, attacks on workers' jobs, wages and conditions, increasing poverty especially in the less developed countries, environmental destruction, wars without end for whole sections of the world and a massive increase in profits for the few trans-national companies which dominate the world economy.

Never more than now are the failings of capitalism exposed. It is so exposed that even the bosses recognise the crisis. The response of the bosses to give away to the failing system billions of pounds of workers' money is unacceptable. Bailing out

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

bankers and the super-rich 1% with our money to protect their system is not the way forward for trade unionists and working class people.

Conference believes that there is an economic alternative to free market capitalism based on the common and democratic public ownership of the major elements of the economy, namely democratic socialism.

Accordingly Conference calls for:

- 1) The nationalisation of all the banks on the basis of democratic public ownership, i.e. run by representatives of banking workers and trade unions, the wider working class, as well as the government. Take them completely out of the hands of the fat cats who made the mess! Compensation should be paid only on the basis of proven need;
- 2) The nationalised banks to offer cheap loans and mortgages for housing and for the planned development of industry, services and social housing;
- 3) The opening of the books of the major companies that dominate the economy; let popular committees of workers, trade unionists and consumer groups see where the profits have gone and what their financial situation really is and for no job losses;
- 4) The ending of fuel poverty by nationalising the oil and gas companies;
- 5) A trade union struggle to increase the national minimum wage to £10 per hour without exemptions for young people, in line with TUC policy. The introduction of a sliding scale of wages with automatic increases to cover inflation;
- 6) The ending of privatisation and for a massive programme of investment to improve public services and to defend public sector jobs and pay.

Accordingly, Conference calls on the leadership of UNISON to use all means at its disposal to publicise and popularise these issues amongst the membership and the working class generally.

City of Glasgow

Economy

73. Ending austerity through progressive taxation

Conference notes the Conservative government's continuing austerity agenda at Westminster, with attacks on public services throughout England and subsequent massive reductions in the 'block grant' allocations for the running of public services in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The austerity agenda has deepened economic inequality, increased levels of poverty and has seen continuing assaults on the most vulnerable in society through cuts to the welfare state, including children, disabled persons, and victims of sexual violence.

Against this backdrop, our members continue to experience poverty and are expected to support themselves whilst under the public sector pay cap and as inflation and the cost of living rise and rise.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference notes that despite nearly a decade of austerity – which was meant to last just five years – the government still plans to continue ideologically motivated austerity measures until at least the mid 2020s.

Conference believes that an alternative economic agenda is needed, not just to defend public services but to help identify and build the public services of the future.

Conference believes that UNISON must be leading the debate on progressive taxation, decent pay, quality jobs and sustainable growth as an alternative to the rampant free-market ideology of the current government.

Therefore, conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign for progressive taxation to fund public services, which places the burden for properly funding public services on those who can most afford it;
- 2) Campaign for tougher actions against tax avoidance schemes, which deprive public services of much needed resources;
- 3) Support research and campaigns on new sources of public funding for public services, such as increasing corporation tax rates, the Robin Hood tax on financial transactions or ending the tax exemptions for private schools;
- 4) Support research into the potential benefits of devolving taxation powers in Northern Ireland, drawing on developments in Scotland and Wales;
- 5) Continue to make the case that higher progressive taxation is positive as it funds better public services in a fair and transparent way for the benefit of everyone.

Mater Hospital

74. Ending austerity through progressive taxation

Conference notes the Conservative government's continuing austerity agenda at Westminster, with attacks on public services in all of our communities.

Conference notes that despite nearly a decade of austerity – which was meant to last just five years – the government still plans to continue ideologically motivated austerity measures until at least the mid 2020s.

Conference believes that an alternative economic agenda is needed, not just to defend public services but to help identify and build the public services of the future.

Conference believes that UNISON must be leading the debate on progressive taxation, decent pay, quality jobs and sustainable growth as an alternative to the rampant free-market ideology of the current government.

Therefore, conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign for progressive taxation to fund public services, which places the burden for properly funding public services on those who can most afford it;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 2) Support research and campaigns on potential new sources of funding for public services;
- 3) Continue to make the case that higher progressive taxation is positive as it funds better public services in a fair and transparent way for the benefit of everyone.

North Derbyshire Healthcare

75. Robin Hood Tax

Conference notes the Robin Hood Tax campaign, founded in 2010, which proposes taxing transactions or trades on a range of financial products such as shares. It is also known as a Financial Transaction Tax (or FTT) in Europe, where it is also popular.

Conference notes the government's ongoing austerity programme which has starved public services of the necessary funding.

Conference believes that a Robin Hood Tax could help fund public services and contribute to the end of austerity.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to support campaigns for a Robin Hood/Financial Transaction Tax;
- 2) Campaign through the TUC and Labour Link for the introduction of a UK Robin Hood/Financial Transaction Tax;
- 3) Support international and EU efforts to regulate the financial sector in order to bring about a worldwide financial transaction tax system to benefit public services and international development.

Neath and Port Talbot County

76. 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, Junior shortly before his death.

The idea is that every single citizen or legal resident, 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 bureaucratic surveillance, errors and non-take-up, as well as enable public sector workers to focus more on helping people. Education and health outcomes could improve which would also create savings for society as well as improving people's living standards considerably. A guaranteed regular payment would give people dignity, a secure floor to stand on, and relief from stress. It is simple, fair and unifying – ending divisive narratives about who does or does not deserve to eat or have shelter. More of us would be able to job share or share the care of our families. Our

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

members could find more time and energy to be active in the union, or do other volunteering. The economy gets a kick-start 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. As members working in the public sector we are often right at the sharp end in terms of assisting people in financial hardship, and we are acutely aware of the rise in inequality and destitution since the 2008 crash and the government's choice of austerity as a response. This is all avoidable in a wealthy economy like ours.

In recent months debate around Universal Basic Income (UBI) has exploded. Governments in Finland, Netherlands, France, Canada, Scotland and Brazil are committed to investigating it through pilot studies. The private and charity sectors are funding experiments in California and Kenya. Leading think-tanks and economists in various countries believe it to be a necessary direction. There have already been studies and comparable schemes in India, Namibia, Canada and Alaska with exciting results.

Conference notes the recent position adopted by the GMB and Unite 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 NDC 2016 and 2017, 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 is important that UNISON's voice is not overlooked in the growing debate about details and therefore Conference instructs the National Executive Council to begin looking at 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; for example a shorter work week, restoration of cuts to vital healthcare and education provision;
- 3) What 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; for example a carbon tax, land value tax, or other tax on unearned income that rightly targets the wealthiest in society.

***Birmingham Colleges
Coventry City
Staffordshire University***

77. Universal Basic Income

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

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, Junior shortly before his death.

The idea is that every single citizen or legal resident, 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 bureaucratic surveillance, 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. A guaranteed regular payment would give people dignity, a secure floor to stand on, and relief from stress. It is simple, fair and unifying – ending divisive narratives about who does or does not deserve to eat or have shelter. More of us would be able to job share or share the care of our families. Our members could find more time and energy to be active in the union, or do other volunteering. The economy gets a kick start 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. As members working in the charity and voluntary sector we are often right at the sharp end in terms of assisting people with financial hardship, and we are acutely aware of the rise in inequality and destitution since the 2008 crash and the government's choice of austerity as a response. This is all avoidable in a wealthy economy like ours. Despite our best efforts our sector can only provide sticking plasters to what is a systemic failure.

In recent months debate around Universal Basic Income (UBI) has exploded. Governments in Finland, Netherlands, France, Canada, Scotland and Brazil are committed to investigating it through pilot studies. The private and charity sectors are funding experiments in California and Kenya. Leading think tanks and economists in various countries believe it to be a necessary direction. There have already been studies and comparable schemes in India, Namibia, Canada and Alaska with exciting results.

Conference notes the recent position adopted by the GMB and Unite 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 2017, and that the West Midlands region has asked the candidates for Regional Mayor to run a trial UBI pilot.

Its important that UNISON's voice is not overlooked in the growing debate about details and therefore Conference instructs the National Executive Council to begin looking at 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,

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 2) What complementary policies and services would need to accompany a UBI to ensure that its impact is progressive; for example a shorter work week, restoration of cuts to vital health care and education provision;
- 3) What 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; for example a carbon tax, land value tax, or other tax on unearned income that rightly targets the wealthiest in society.

West Midlands Community

Pensions

78. Triple -Lock on State Pensions

Conference notes that UNISON supports the "triple lock" which works by increasing the state pension by the highest of; average earnings, the consumer price index or 2.5%.

Conference further notes that increasingly politicians have threatened the future of the "triple lock" proposing a "double lock" which would remove the 2.5% guarantee. This is despite the fact that the work and pensions select committee acknowledge that the "triple lock" "has made a valuable contribution in increasing the relative value of the state pension".

In addition, Conference is aware that the state pension does not increase if you live in Canada, New Zealand or Australia as increases only apply to pensioners living in the European Economic Area (EEA), Gibraltar or Switzerland or a country that has a social security agreement with the UK.

Therefore, Conference calls on the National Executive Council to work to initiate a union-wide campaign to protect the 'triple-lock' on our state pensions, extend or protect it to any recipient irrespective of which country they live in and to preserve the universal benefits which the Tories have indicated they intend to scrap.

National Retired Members Organisation

International

79. Modern Slavery

Estimates show there are more than 21 million modern slaves worldwide. Modern slavery takes many forms: forced labour; human trafficking; child slavery; bonded labour and abuses in global supply chains that mean that the food we eat and goods we buy are often linked to slavery.

Forced labour is any work or service which people are forced to do against their will, under threat of punishment. Almost all slavery practices contain some element of forced labour. Domestic work, agriculture, construction, manufacturing and entertainment are among the sectors most concerned. Migrant workers, indigenous people, women, children and disabled people, especially those with a learning disability, are particularly vulnerable to forced labour.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Human trafficking involves recruitment, harbouring or transporting people into a situation of exploitation through the use of violence, deception or coercion and forced to work against their will. In other words, trafficking is a process of enslaving people, coercing them into a situation with no way out, and exploiting them. Women and children are at most risk of trafficking and although many are trafficked for sexual exploitation, the majority of people are trafficked into labour exploitation.

Conference is appalled that globally 168 million children are at work instead of in school, many millions are working in agriculture, manufacturing, mining and other sectors, and the goods they produce are an integral part of the reality of global supply chains. At least half of the total child labourers are in particularly hazardous work. This figure excludes the millions of girls who are forced into child marriage and work in their homes. Conference reiterates its call for the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to classify child marriage as a form of child labour.

Conference welcomes UNISON's campaigning on Qatar and against the 'kafala system' of bonded labour. At the end of 2017 Qatar announced significant changes to its labour laws which, if properly implemented, could lead to significant improvements for migrant workers in that country. However other Gulf countries continue to have some of the worst employment laws in the world, with millions of migrant workers denied the right to form and join unions and "sponsorship" systems that tie workers to their employer leaving workers completely at the mercy of their employers. Thousands of foreign workers remain stranded in Saudi Arabia, with their wages unpaid and having to ask their home governments to help them return home.

Conference notes that in 2015 the UK adopted the Modern Slavery Act which aims to make prosecuting traffickers easier by consolidating the existing slavery offences and seeks to eliminate abuses in global supply chains by making UK based multinational enterprises publish regular Transparency in Supply Chain (TiSC) statements. Although a step in the right direction the Modern Slavery Act is too heavily focused on policing, and doesn't provide protection for the victims. Public bodies are not covered by the Act and do not have to produce TiSC statements.

Conference welcomes the fact that UNISON was the first union to comply with the Act and produce a TiSC statement and is the only union to work in partnership with Electronics Watch, an NGO campaigning to end abuse in supply chains, to tackle its own electronics procurement. Conference calls for the Act to be amended to compel public bodies to look at supply chain abuses in public procurement.

Eliminating contemporary forms of slavery is a rights-based issue and a moral imperative for the union movement. Conference, therefore, instructs the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign for the Modern Slavery Act to be strengthened and in particular for it to be extended to cover public bodies;
- 2) To continue to campaign against the 'kefala' system in Qatar and other Gulf States;
- 3) To continue to campaign to get the ILO to classify child marriage as a form of child labour;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 4) To raise these issues with EPSU and PSI and encourage PSI to take up work around public procurement and global supply chains.

National Executive Council

80. Our place on the global stage post-Brexit

Conference is concerned that post-Brexit, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights will be undermined at home and abroad due to the Tory Government's weak and wobbly Brexit and due to trade negotiations failing to take into account social and environmental protections, workers and human rights.

International Trade Secretary Liam Fox started discussions on a potential future trade deal between the United Kingdom and the United States at the first meeting of the UK-US Trade Working Group in July 2017, despite European Union (EU) rules meaning the United Kingdom cannot sign a trade deal until it has left the EU.

Fox had already announced in 2016 that the UK would open new trade offices in 3 US cities, including Raleigh, North Carolina which introduced the "Bathroom Law" discriminating against trans people and contributing to a vitriolic atmosphere of hate for LGBT people.

The US has not ratified some of the most fundamental labour rights conventions set out by the International Labour Organisation, including freedom of association and collective bargaining.

The UK-US trade working group is the first of ten such groups that the Department of International Trade (DIT) is setting up involving 15 countries, including China, Saudi Arabia and South Korea. Crawford Falconer, who started at the DIT as Chief Trade Negotiations Adviser in August 2017, was a member of the Legatum Institute think tank's "special trade commission" which drew up a report calling for the UK's regulations to be "put on the table" in trade negotiations with other countries.

Conference is concerned that future trade deals will be made with countries that have little regard for public services, trade union rights, or human rights of LGBT people and workers. Painstaking work over decades to build UK public services that are accessible and inclusive will be dismantled if profit becomes the only driver, which will detrimentally impact the most disadvantaged in society, who are the most reliant on public services and most likely to be in precarious employment.

The UK government still maintains it wishes to promote LGBT equality in its international work, while its actions on trade would suggest the opposite.

Conference notes opportunities to take our campaigns forward, including around the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), hosted by the UK in April 2018. The Commonwealth defines itself as an association 'committed to' equality, human rights and non-discrimination, but 36 of its 52 member states still retain laws that criminalise consensual same sex relations, and many also fail to recognise or uphold the rights of their trans citizens. Those laws are largely a shameful legacy of British imperialism and colonialism, and the trade union movement has an important role to play in working for change, alongside civil society organisations representing LGBT people living in the countries that retain these laws.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference therefore welcomes the continuing work of the national LGBT committee to build on links with international allies including LGBT networks in other unions and global union bodies, and LGBT community organisations including ILGA and the Commonwealth Equality Network.

Conference therefore instructs the National Executive Council, working with the national LGBT committee, other relevant structures of the union and appropriate external organisations to:

- 1) Continue to campaign for the inclusion of social and environmental protections, LGBT, human and workers rights in trade negotiations and for no less protection than we have now;
- 2) Continue work relating to the Commonwealth following the 2018 CHOGM;
- 3) Raise awareness on these issues and engage branches, regions and self-organised groups in appropriate campaigns.

National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee

81. Workers' Rights in Turkey

Since the failed coup attempt in July 2016 Turkey has experienced a rapid deterioration of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. President Erdogan has used the state of emergency to detain, dismiss and silence his critics; targeting trade unionists, journalists, human rights defenders and anyone perceived not to support the government.

Approximately 120,000 public sector employees have been dismissed or suspended arbitrarily, accused of terrorism related crimes. In almost every case there has been no credible evidence of wrong doing and no access to justice. Many have been deprived of their pensions, passports and prospects of finding a job either the public or private sectors.

Education and healthcare have been badly affected by the state of emergency. Over 21,000 healthcare workers have been dismissed, forcing patients to endure lengthy delays and travel long distances to receive care.

Trade union activists have been disproportionately targeted by government decrees. Many have been dismissed or arrested for social media posts and conducting legitimate trade union business. Offices have been raided, strikes have been banned and statements critical of the government have been prohibited.

Turkey is now amongst the ten worst countries in the world for workers, according to the ITUC, but denial of workers' rights did not start with the coup. For many years Turkey has been awarded a rating of 5, i.e. no guarantee of rights, in the annual global rights index as trade unionists have been subjected to repressive laws, a flawed legal system, police brutality and a continued erosion of their rights.

The Turkish government is now the biggest jailer of journalists in the world, and has shut down over 160 media outlets and 3,800 associations and foundations. Conference calls on the government of Turkey to drop the charges and release

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

hundreds of innocent journalists, academics and human rights defenders, including the chair and director of Amnesty International Turkey.

Kurdish communities, particularly in the southeast of Turkey have been devastated by continuing violence, curfews and the mass deployment of security forces, since the 2015 elections and breakdown of peace talks between the Turkish government and the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). Many have been evicted from their homes and denied access to education and health and fundamental human rights. MPs and democratically elected representatives, particularly from the People's Democratic party (HDP), have been detained or replaced by government appointed trustees, who have dismissed thousands more municipal workers, further damaging public services.

Conference condemns the Turkish government's attacks on areas of northern Syrian controlled by the Kurdish YPG militia and their allies which have only served to aggravate the horrors of that country's civil war.

Conference is concerned that the UK government has failed to respond to the erosion of democracy and human rights in Turkey, instead prioritising its own post EU exit economic interests. Likewise many European Union (EU) member states, including the UK, have failed to respond to the refugee crisis in Turkey, denying any responsibility for millions of vulnerable people fleeing conflict, violence and persecution, particularly the atrocities in Syria.

Conference welcomes UNISON's solidarity and support for the trade union movement in Turkey and calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue supporting workers' rights in Turkey through EPSU and PSI solidarity initiatives and direct work 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) End the state of emergency, uphold workers' rights, end the arbitrary dismissal of public sector workers and ensure those who have been unfairly suspended or dismissed are given the right to a fair hearing and reinstatement;
 - b) Lift the closure of media outlets and release all journalists detained for exercising their right to freedom of expression;
 - c) End the repression of the Kurdish population;
 - d) Release all political prisoners and resume the peace process, in which trade unions and civil society can fully participate.
- 3) 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

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

82. Trump: Hands Off Jerusalem, Free Palestine Now

Conference condemns US President Donald Trump's unilateral decision to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and move the US embassy to the city. His announcement seeks to legitimise the occupation, defy international law and successive United Nations resolutions, deny the rights of millions of Palestinians and undermine the prospects of peace.

Since the inauguration of President Trump in January 2017 the Israeli government has intensified its occupation of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. They now plan to build thousands of new homes for settlers on land allocated for a future Palestinian state. About 250 illegal settlements and outposts have been built in violation of international law, housing at least half a million settlers on over 60 per cent of Palestinian land. Vast construction programmes have been accompanied by the demolition of thousands of Palestinian homes. In 2016 alone the Israeli government destroyed at least 1,094 Palestinian-owned structures in the West Bank.

The building and expansion of settlements and associated infrastructure has a devastating impact on the lives and livelihoods of Palestinians, restricting their freedom of movement, access to essential services, homes and jobs.

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. Conference further believes that President Trump cannot be an honest broker of peace, 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 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. Conference also welcomes the United Nations Human Rights Council decision to establish a database of business enterprises engaged in Israeli settlement activity in the occupied Palestinian territory.

Conference reaffirms its support for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS), including a UN arms embargo in 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 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 and corporate complicity with Israeli violations of international law.

Conference calls of the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to campaign for the British government to recognise the Palestinian state and fully support the implementation United Nations resolution 2334 and

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

other resolutions calling for an end to the Israeli occupation and blockade of Gaza and supporting the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination;

- 2) Support the European Trade Union Initiative for Justice for Palestine;
- 3) Encourage branches to support and affiliate to the Palestine Solidarity Campaign.

Halton

83. Palestine

Conference notes that Israel carries on denying Palestinians their fundamental rights and refusing to comply with international law. It maintains a regime of settler colonialism, apartheid and occupation over the Palestinian people.

Conference observes that this is only possible because of international support for Israel; governments do not hold Israel to account; corporations and institutions all over the world help Israel to oppress Palestinians.

Conference further notes that, because those in power refuse to act to stop this injustice, Palestinian civil society has called for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions, a global citizens' response of solidarity with the Palestinian struggle for freedom, justice and equality which UNISON has long supported a vibrant global movement made up of unions.

In keeping with this support, Conference welcomes the publication by UNISON, with the support of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign and Palestinian Lawyers for Human Rights, of a revised version of "Palestine: Is your pension fund investing in the occupation? A UNISON guide to engaging your pension fund."

This guide is aimed at UNISON members and others in the Local Government Pension Scheme but will be relevant to anybody in a funded scheme that relies on income from investments. It explains how to argue for our pension funds to engage with the companies they invest in to demand they end their involvement in the occupied Palestinian territory and in the violation of Palestinian human rights and it sets out the steps we should take to ensure our pensions are not invested in companies involved with the occupation.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Circulate the guide widely;
- 2) Develop training and support to enable members to act, in an effective and sustained way, on its recommendations;
- 3) Collect from regions and branches, information about approaches to pension funds and the results of doing so;
- 4) Report and circulate this information appropriately.

City of Wolverhampton

84. Palestine - Detention of Children

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

The arrest of 16-year-old Ahed Tamimi shone a spotlight on Israel's systematic abuse of minors through the process of military detention. The treatment of Ahed rightly generated a global response, but her situation is far from unique.

Each year the Israeli military arrests and prosecutes around 500 children. From the moment of arrest, Palestinian children encounter ill-treatment and a denial of their basic rights.

Children as young as 12 are routinely:

- 1) Taken from their homes by at gunpoint in night time raid;
- 2) Blindfolded, bound and shackled;
- 3) Interrogated without a lawyer or relative being present and with no visual recording;
- 4) Put into solitary confinement;
- 5) Forced to sign confessions (often in Hebrew- a language they don't understand).

Israel is the only country in the world that automatically and systematically prosecutes children in military courts that lack fundamental fair trial rights and protection.

Conference recognises that these practices involve widespread and systematic violations of international law and as such condemns them.

Conference believes that Israel has a responsibility under international human rights conventions for the safety, welfare and human rights protection of Palestinian children living under occupation.

Conference welcomed the early day motion 563 tabled in late 2017 (sponsored by Richard Burden MP) and supports its call for "Palestinian children to be treated no less favourably than Israeli children".

Conference also recognises the work of the DCIP (Defence for Children International – Palestine) in supporting and advocating for these children.

Conference therefore:

- a) Supports calls for the recommendations of UNICEF's 2013 report "children in Israeli military detention" (which remain largely unmet, should be carried out in full by the Israeli government without delay and that all children in military detention are released immediately;
- b) Call on the British government to address these issues with Israel;
- c) Agrees to make a donation of £1000 to the DCIP.

City of Wolverhampton

85. End the detention of Palestinian children

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference is appalled at the treatment of Palestinian children by Israel. The arrest of 16 year old Ahed Tamimi has shone a spotlight on Israel's systematic abuse of minors through the process of military detention. The treatment of Ahed has rightly generated a global response, but her situation is far from unique.

Each year the Israeli military arrests and prosecutes around 700 Palestinian children. From the moment of arrest, Palestinian children encounter ill-treatment and a denial of their basic rights. Children as young as 12 are still routinely:

- 1) Taken from their homes at gunpoint in night-time raids by soldiers;
- 2) Blindfolded, bound and shackled;
- 3) Interrogated without a lawyer or relative being present and with no audio-visual recording;
- 4) Put into solitary confinement;
- 5) Forced to sign confessions (often in Hebrew – a language they do not understand).

This is in clear breach of their rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to which Israel is a signatory.

Conference condemns Israel's treatment of Palestinian children and calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Lobby the UK and devolved governments to press the Government of Israel to end the widespread and systemic human rights violations suffered by Palestinian children in Israeli military custody;
- b) Encourage all branches to write to their MPs and MSPs calling on them to raise this issue in the Westminster and devolved Parliaments and to call on their governments to press the Government of Israel to end the widespread and systemic human rights violations suffered by Palestinian children in Israeli military custody;
- c) Publicise UNISON's position to members to raise awareness of the issue and encourage them to lobby their MPs and MSPs;
- d) Raise the issue of Israel's detention and treatment of Palestinian children through Labour Link and call on them to add their voice to the condemnation of Israel's treatment of Palestinian child prisoners.

Aberdeenshire

86. Free Abdullah Öcalan from 19 years of imprisonment

Conference notes that Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan has been imprisoned by Turkey for 19 years and for most of that time has been kept in solitary confinement on the island prison of Imrali. For the past two years he has not been allowed contact with his family, lawyers or independent medical support. This is a clear breach of his human rights.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference notes that the Kurdish Question remains a fundamental issue within Turkey and that without a resolution to this the Turkish state will continue its oppressive and militaristic policies to contain the aspirations of the 20 million Kurds in the country.

Conference recognises that Öcalan is the recognised leader of the Kurdish people and his release from prison is a central demand of the Kurds to allow him to fulfil his role in seeking to achieve a democratic and peaceful resolution. We note that this was recognised by the Turkish government who engaged in negotiations with him until President Erdogan decided to break off the talks on the eve of an agreement that would have ensured the continuation of the PKK ceasefire and democratic methods prioritised to achieve a resolution.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council, as part of its campaign to support an end to the conflict in Turkey, support for trade union and democratic organisations and the release of all political prisoners, to support the growing campaigns calling for Öcalan's release and to affiliate to the trade union led Freedom for Öcalan Campaign.

South Lanarkshire

87. Colombia

Conference notes that in December 2017 Amnesty International produced a report on the killing and forced disappearances of human rights defenders in the twenty years since the United Nations adopted the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders. That report finds Colombia as having the worst record than any other country.

Conference regrets that, one year after the signing of the peace agreement between the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), killings, intimidation and internal displacement of social activists remain high according to the Colombian government's own findings: 63 murders; 12,000 cases of intimidation and threats and 54,000 people displaced from their homes in 2017 alone. Independent research gives higher figures for each of these categories.

Conference further notes that whilst the FARC has complied with its obligations under the peace agreement moving former guerrillas into transitional zones, fully decommissioning its weapons and transforming itself into a legal political party, the Colombian government has stalled, backtracked and even failed to deliver on its obligations leading both Colombians and international observers to question whether the government is either capable of delivering or is even considering breaching the peace agreement.

Decisive legislative and presidential elections will be held in March and May 2018 in which candidates close to the former President Alvaro Uribe, who opposes the peace agreement and under whom some of the worst human rights abuses took place, could do very well.

That is why Conference believes that UNISON must continue to support the Colombian trade union movement and civil society in their defence of the peace

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

process which is a fundamental precondition to social and economic justice for the people of Colombia, one of the most unequal countries in Latin America.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council, therefore, to:

- 1) To continue to affiliate to and support Justice for Colombia and in particular its work on observing and monitoring the implementation of the peace agreement;
- 2) To support the Colombian trade union movement through the UNISON International Development Fund;
- 3) To raise these issues with EPSU and PSI and urge Labour Link to take them up with the Labour Party.

Lanarkshire Health

88. The People of Nicaragua Face a Serious Assault by the US Orchestrated by Trump

The people of Nicaragua face a serious assault by The US orchestrated by Trump.

The proposed Nicaraguan Investment Conditionality Act (NICA) of 2017 states that its purpose is 'to oppose loans at international financial institutions for the Government of Nicaragua unless the Government of Nicaragua is taking effective steps to hold free, fair, and transparent elections, and for other purposes.'

Running at 250 million US Dollars annually these loans are being invested in education, social programmes, electrification, roads and other infra-structures activities.

In late 2017 a world banking report concluded that the FSLN government had achieved remarkable turnaround in reducing poverty and inequality.

The NICA Act would mean the reversal of the Nicaraguan government's highly successful poverty reduction programmes; those who are most impoverished will suffer the most serious consequences.

The NICA Act represents an economic war that would severely undermine the stability not just of Nicaragua but the whole region.

Conference recognises the great strides made by the Sandinista government (despite few resources) in terms of free access to health care and education and alleviating poverty.

Conference recognises this attack for what it is.

Part of the ongoing campaign by the US to maintain a neoliberal hegemony within Latin and central America.

The hypocrisy of the US that drives its policy, is clear in its approach in Honduras a country described by the ICAHR as "one of the most hostile and dangerous countries for human rights defenders."

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Following contested elections late in 2017, the US recognised the re-election of the Honduran president following an election marred by allegations of fraud which led to mass protests against the result and the concern of the organisation of American states and the European union that the elections were flawed. Whilst at the same time making unsubstantiated allegations against Nicaragua.

Conference further believes that this attack is another attempt to undermine the Sandinista government driven by the US states hatred of a country which does not kowtow to its neo-liberal agenda and its perceived right to 'govern' Latin American countries and that the sole reason for this economic attack is that the Sandinista government is a socialist one and that its programme is an Anathema to Trump and the US right.

Conference therefore expresses its support for Nicaragua and stands with the Nicaraguan people in opposition to NICA.

Conference also agrees that UNISON should:

- 1) Raise the issue with MPs and seek their support for the campaign to stop NICA;
- 2) Raise within Labour link and the Labour Party;
- 3) Write to all branches encouraging them to affiliate to NSCAG (Nicaragua solidarity campaign action group) and to support their campaign and petition.

City of Wolverhampton

Europe

89. The UK EU Withdrawal Agreement and the Future UK - EU Relationship: Campaigning for a New EU Deal Fit For Workers

Conference notes that since the triggering of Article 50 March 2017 the government's European Union (EU) withdrawal negotiations have been embarrassingly incompetent. There has been no clear EU exit plan or cohesive strategy to get the best deal from the negotiations for the UK economy and workers.

The weak UK negotiations have been a result of divisive Tory internal wrangling between the hard and soft "Brexiters". The endless emphasis on 'taking back control', free trade deals, creating a low tax country, the loss of freedom of movement for UK workers and the dismantling EU citizen rights has been created by a clique of Tory hard line 'Brexiters' and their media supporters. The EU Referendum campaign created an environment where hostility to all migrants flourished.

Conference believes this narrow vision must be challenged.

Their vision of the UK's future relationship with the EU has overshadowed the government's negotiations to the detriment of getting a deal that would be best for the UK's future by providing: stability for investments in quality jobs; funding for public services, regional economies and infrastructure projects; the ending of austerity with guaranteed protection of employment, social, equality and

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

environmental standards; a fairer and more equal society with an emphasis on real opportunities for young people and continued EU freedom of movement.

Conference further notes that in the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 the government has given itself unprecedented executive powers to amend, repeal or weaken retained EU law, whilst restricting the sovereign power of parliament in the process. These new 'Henry VIII powers' allow Ministers to amend Acts of Parliament, without the need for full Parliamentary scrutiny and are nothing to do with the UK people "taking back control".

UNISON believes this puts our equality, human rights and workplace rights at risk when the UK leaves the EU. These include laws protecting women, Black, LGBT and disabled workers from discrimination at work; rights to time off for working parents; holiday pay and protections from excessive working hours; equal treatment rights for part-time, fixed term and agency workers; information and consultation rights and health and safety standards.

The Scottish Parliament, Wales Assembly and Northern Ireland Assembly (when not suspended) also all have concerns that this Bill threatens and weakens their devolution settlements and arrangements.

Conference believes that existing equality, human and workers' rights, derived from EU legislation, need to be safeguarded in the future and calls on the government to guarantee that no future changes can be made through the back door and only through explicit primary legislation open to full parliamentary scrutiny, civic and trade union consultation.

Conference also believes that future UK citizens' and workers' rights must also be updated in line with progressive improvements and benefits made through both European Court of Justice (ECJ) rulings and the new forthcoming EU Social Pillar of Rights. The government also needs to adopt the equivalent protections that other EU members have in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and international human rights treaties.

Conference further notes with dismay that the exact details of the withdrawal terms are the subject of ongoing and future negotiations and cannot be known until those negotiations are very near completion. This means that parliament and the public will effectively have no say as to what goes in the final Bill on the Withdrawal Agreement.

Given the lack of consultation on the deal and the terms for the UK's future EU relationship Conference believes that it is vital that the government sticks to its promise to give parliament time to debate, scrutinise and have a meaningful vote on the final Withdrawal Agreement & Implementation Bill.

Conference further believes that the government's determination to ensure that parliament and the UK public get little say on the outcomes of withdrawal have also been reflected in the proposals in the Bills on Trade, Customs and Immigration which give new powers to Ministers to enact secondary legislation with no guarantees that either new International Trade Treaties or UK Immigration laws will be created through primary legislation, parliamentary debate and scrutiny.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference also believes that a new EU deal will only be fair to workers if it does not progressively undermine workers' rights over time. Therefore any future new trade deal between the UK and EU must include a mechanism whereby the UK cannot fall behind the EU on improvements to employment rights.

Conference therefore is very dismayed with the process that the Government has set out for how the new future EU deal for the UK will be agreed once we have begun to implement the Withdrawal Agreement. Conference notes the new agreement(s) governing the UK's future relationship with the EU can only be legally concluded once the UK has left the EU and that this may take the form of a single agreement or a number of agreements covering different aspects of the new UK-EU relationship.

However the government has stated that parliament's role will be limited to just the ratification process of the new EU deal agreements because the 'CRAG' (Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010) process is likely to apply to agreements on our future relationship. Parliament will only be allowed to oppose (or tacitly accept) a treaty in full – it cannot amend any of the new agreements or treaties. This means that parliament will not have the power to debate, amend or vote on any of the new Agreements or Treaties but will only be able to agree or disagree to ratify the Agreement or Treaty laid by the Minister.

This means that the European Parliament and the other EU 27 member states are likely to have more of a democratic say on the content of the new UK-EU Agreement or Treaty than the UK public and parliament.

Conference believes this democratic deficit must be immediately addressed and that a new democratic process for treaties, involving public consultation and the opportunity to debate and amend treaties must be adopted.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to campaign for workers' rights and quality public services to be a fundamental part of a future UK-EU agreement and to:

- 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 at Conference 2017:
 - 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, STUC, WTUC, Labour Party, MPs and Peers, MEPs, EPSU, ETUC and PSI and civic alliances - who specifically campaign on protecting public services, employment rights, human rights, equality, migration rights, anti-racism, the environment, animal welfare, health and safety and democratising trade deals - to ensure the government adopts a transparent and democratic approach to all aspects of Exiting the EU negotiations;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 3) Campaign with politicians for an open, transparent and democratic process in both the EU and UK so that the UK public and parliament can have a say in the content of the Withdrawal Agreement and Implementation Bill and the new UK-EU Agreements or Treaties. Including addressing all devolved issues in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and protecting the vital Good Friday Agreement and the need for a solution for the Irish border that satisfies the Irish Congress of Trade Unions;
- 4) Campaign for an Impact Assessment of the final new EU deal with particular attention on how changes will impact the UK in the following areas
 - i) Economy and regional growth;
 - ii) Public services and procurement;
 - iii) Employment rights;
 - iv) Income equality and gender pay;
 - v) Jobs, skills, pay, terms and conditions;
 - vi) Health and safety;
 - vii) Equality, citizen and human rights;
 - viii) Environmental, food, animal welfare, public health standards and consumer protection;
 - ix) Land border between UK and the Republic of Ireland;
- 5) 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 EU social, consumer and environmental standards;
- 6) Oppose any new EU agreement or trade deals which undermine the democratic UK's right to keep public services public or use special investor protection through ISDS (Investor state dispute settlement) or the ICS (Investor Court System) or 'ratchet and standstill 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) Campaign for better and more flexible use in the UK of State Aid and procurement rules to expand public ownership, fund quality in-house public services and intervene in strategic industries, infrastructure and utilities; reject either UK or EU de-regulation; learn lessons how countries like France promote public ownership; and over turn European Court of Justice rulings which put market competition and business interests before workers rights;
- 8) 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

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

take action against the cutting of pay and conditions by closing down cheap labour loopholes which exploit low paid workers and thereby strengthening workplace protections;

- 9) Campaign for the maintenance of full EU citizens' rights for EU citizens in the UK and UK citizens living in Europe and to continue to provide support and information to UNISON's estimated 70,000 EU members;
- 10) 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 after having exited 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;
- 11) Work with the TUC to campaign for the best transitional terms and democratic dispute resolution options in the Withdrawal Agreement and Implementation Bill;
- 12) Evaluate the options for the best future trade model and relationship or agreement options that provides the best economic opportunities for the UK to protect living standards and social provisions, public services and jobs, now and for future generations, and share with UNISON members.

National Executive Council

90. Working people already paid for the financial crises; they should not pay for Brexit

The Conservatives' self-imposed Brexit deadline is fast approaching but they remain distracted by internal divisions and ideological entrenchment, which is in real danger of pushing the country towards a cliff edge. In February 2018, Cabinet ministers have lined up to produce a series of 'major speeches' on Brexit that has only succeeded in highlighting how much the last two years have been a vortex of in-decision, rhetoric, blue passports and chlorinated chicken.

Conferences notes that with no concrete plan on creating a stable economy or how our public services will be decently funded, the need for stability and reassurance for working people has never been greater.

The release of a wide-ranging assessment on the economic impact of Brexit has estimated that the north-east would lose 16% of regional economic growth if no deal is reached. This is a region with already high levels of unemployment, the only UK region to export more than it imports and where approximately 160,000 jobs are directly linked to membership of the single market. Given that this region has already been on the receiving end of some of the deepest public sector cuts in the country the stakes could not be higher.

If Brexit was driven by widespread disillusionment with an economic system that favoured the rich and powerful and reduced living standards, the reality is that the Tories' strategy will only succeed in establishing a low-tax, low-regulation haven for unscrupulous businesses where competitiveness is driven by attacks on workers' rights.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Though UNISON had backed Remain after a major cross union consultation exercise, Conference is not willing to indulge in a 2016 referendum post mortem but wants to face the future putting forward arguments that best defend public services and UNISON members' jobs and employment conditions in all parts of the UK. Talks of a Canada-style CETA arrangement highlights real dangers.

Nobody voted for Brexit to be poorer and work longer hours in unsafe conditions. The trade union movement must therefore argue for a worker's Brexit which emphasises the need for an economic investment strategy that delivers quality jobs and protects living standards and employment rights.

Already our NHS is experiencing a Brexit-induced drain of qualified European staff. It has recently been reported that almost 10,000 EU NHS workers have already left since the Brexit vote, and one in five of European NHS doctors have made plans to leave the UK. In addition, official figures have shown that the number of nurses from the EU registering to working the UK has dropped by 96%.

Conference therefore believes that public sector workers from Europe who came to the UK to work for our NHS, schools and social care, must be reassured they are welcome and can remain as part of any Brexit deal.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue the lobbying on behalf of UNISON members in the Westminster Parliament, European Parliament and devolved administrations in line with the policy passed at the 2017 Conference;
- 2) Continue to campaign with the the3Million campaign group of EU citizens living in the UK and to promote the UNISON EU members group;
- 3) Set up a new programme of forward looking member and activist EU briefing materials that can assist the understanding of different types of UK- EU relationships and different types of trade agreements;
- 4) Assess the costs and benefits of different UK-EU future relationship agreements based on the UNISON EU exit objectives from 2017.

Northern Region

91. Exiting the EU and Devolution

Conference welcomes UNISON's priorities in our Exiting the EU campaign that seeks to inform and engage members and the general public on the impact of the EU exit negotiations. This strategy recognises the importance of addressing all devolved issues in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Conference recognises that exiting the EU can have a differential impact in devolved administrations. Scotland has particular demographic challenges that may require a different approach to migration policy to other areas of the UK. For that reason, UNISON Scotland has been working with the Scottish Government and others to highlight the threat to public services of the UK Government's approach to the negotiations. In particular, the case has been made for the devolution of elements of

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

immigration policy, building on international models such as those in the Province of Quebec, Canada.

Conference welcomes the submissions made by UNISON at UK level and in the devolved administrations over the devolved issues in the EU Withdrawal Bill. These representations respect the devolution settlements that are being undermined by the UK government's attempts to retain devolved powers at Westminster. UNISON is not opposed to common frameworks in the UK, so long as they start from the position of respecting devolution. This means that any powers that are not specifically reserved should be automatically devolved in accordance with the relevant legislation.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to work closely with UNISON regions in the devolved administrations, as the EU exit negotiations and related legislation develops. This approach should ensure that UNISON is campaigning for an outcome that respects the devolution settlement and reflects the particular challenges facing different parts of the UK.

Scotland Region

92. Stop the EU exit power grab

Conference believes that the Westminster government has put in place a so called 'constitutional power grab' so that only the UK government can control how, when and what type of European Union (EU) exit happens.

This establishes Westminster control over laws which are within the constitutional jurisdiction of Wales (and the other devolved governments), enabling the UK Government, by use of the Royal Prerogative, to amend, change and alter law as they consider appropriate with only limited reference to Parliament and without the requirement for the consent of the devolved administrations.

This approach has totally undermined the scrutiny and decision making powers of the UK sovereign parliament and made any 'meaningful vote' on the EU exit negotiations in parliament redundant.

Conference further believes that this power grab has been co-ordinated by the government so that it is replicated in all the EU exit related Bills. These Bills give government Ministers so called 'Henry VIII' powers to introduce legislative changes through secondary legislation so that parliament has no say or ability to amend the proposals once we leave the EU in March 2019:

- A) EU (Withdrawal) Bill 2018
- B) Trade Bill 2018
- C) The Customs - Taxation (cross-border trade) Bill 2018

Conference notes that this means UK employment rights and any future protection of those rights by the European Court of Justice (ECJ) are fundamentally at risk.

Conference further believes that working people in the UK could lose out on key rights at work when we leave the EU. Recent statements by senior UK ministers suggest that plans are already being put in place to scrap the Working Time

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Regulations, which provide key rights to holiday pay, rest breaks, and protection from excessive working hours.

The EU (Withdrawal) Bill in particular leaves employment, equality and human rights vulnerable. They can be revised and weakened by any future government straight after the UK exits the EU unless the Bill is amended successfully. The UK governments red line on EU exit negotiations is that the “the authority of EU law in Britain” will end on EU exit day and so might existing workers rights.

This could just be the start. There is also a genuine risk that the rights of UK workers will not keep pace with developments in the EU in respect of equality and employment law – delivered through future EU standards or decisions of the ECJ. The EU would like the ECJ to receive referrals of new court cases involving the UK after EU Exit day, if the alleged rule-breaking happened during Britain’s membership but the government is holding on to its red line.

Conference believes therefore that the Withdrawal Agreement (WA) and the Framework for the future EU UK Agreement (FFEUUKA) resolution motion and the Withdrawal and Implementation Bill (all expected in Autumn 2018) must have clear employment protections in them to prevent the UK government weakening employment rights on day one of EU exit.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign with MPs, Peers, MEPs and the Welsh and Scottish Governments for an open, transparent and democratic process in both the EU and UK legislative and parliamentary processes so that UK public and parliament can have a say on the content of the Withdrawal Agreement, through select committee evidence, and the opportunity to scrutinise and amend the Withdrawal Implementation Agreement;
- 2) Campaign for the Withdrawal Agreement to address all devolved issues in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and in particular seek to include a clear solution to prevent a hard border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland and protect the fundamental framework for the Good Friday Agreement;
- 3) Campaign for the Withdrawal Agreement (WA) and the Framework for the future EU UK Agreement (FFEUUKA) seeking to include:
 - a) Protection of existing EU/UK employment rights;
 - b) A commitment that UK employment law will keep pace with improvements in EU social and employment policy;
 - c) That the UK courts have regard to both existing and new ECJ decisions once the UK leaves the EU.

North Wales Health

93. Trade Democracy after the EU exit. We Need to Stop the Deregulatory Trade Agenda

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference notes that international trade deals are often imagined to be about tariffs, but they can potentially constrain domestic policy-makers in areas including product quality regulations, labour standards and environmental protection. Trade deals can also require governments to open up public services to privatisation and create barriers to renationalisation.

Because trade deals can limit the scope of democratic decision-making after they are agreed, Conference believes that it is of great importance that the negotiation process is subject to very strong democratic oversight and accountability to the public.

Conference notes that the European Union's efforts to negotiate the TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership) deal with the USA without meaningful public scrutiny were only thwarted by the energetic resistance of campaign groups and the growing public awareness of the damage it would do. Conference believes that, as a non-EU member, the UK will need to develop more democratic and robust scrutiny of trade negotiations.

However, Conference notes with deep concern that the Conservative government's Trade Bill does not provide a mechanism for effective Parliamentary scrutiny or public engagement in the content of future trade deals. Moreover, Conference is deeply concerned about the motives and methods of Sir Liam Fox, the Secretary of State for International Trade. TTIP was defeated but Conference is aware that there are people in positions of power in the UK, EU and USA who remain committed to the deregulatory logic of TTIP and will pursue it in other ways.

Conference welcomes the work done by UNISON in conjunction with Global Justice Now and War on Want in producing briefings on trade issues that seek to demystify this topic for members and the public.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue and intensify the union's efforts to educate and agitate around the issue of trade deals;
- 2) Continue to work with campaign organisations that share our objectives in this area, including War on Want and Global Justice Now;
- 3) Work with the Labour Link to promote knowledge of, and opposition to, the Government's deregulatory trade agenda amongst MPs and MEPs.

Sefton

94. A Trade Deal with the EU Should Not Limit Direct Provision of Public Services

Conference notes the ongoing negotiation about the terms of a trade deal between the UK and the EU. Conference believes that the Conservative government cannot be trusted to resist making concessions to the EU that would continue the growth of market mechanisms and private companies in the delivery of our public services.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference welcomes the gains made by the Labour party in both vote share and seats at the 2017 general election and the potential for the UK to soon elect a Labour government that favours direct provision of public services.

Conference believes that:

- 1) There should be no requirement for market mechanisms to be applied to our public services or our NHS;
- 2) Democratic governments should be free to intervene in markets, for example, to protect jobs and capacity in key industries;
- 3) Public authorities should be free to prefer public sector providers or more ethical employers when commissioning services;
- 4) Public authorities should be free to choose to provide services in-house without any requirement for market testing.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Investigate and publish a briefing on the role of EU rules in limiting the discretion of the UK public bodies to favour and promote direct provision of public services;
- b) Campaign to ensure that any trade deal with the EU does not include the continuation of any such impediments to a UK government or devolved administrations.

Manchester

95. Defend Freedom Of Movement

Conference notes:

- 1) The continuing rhetoric from politicians and from many media outlets that foments division through the scapegoating of migrants, refugees and Muslims;
- 2) That about 2.8m 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 rightly prioritising defending members who are migrants and is actively seeking to recruit new members from amongst 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, supposedly in return for access to EU markets;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 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 UNISON 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.

Transport for Greater Manchester

96. Defend Free Movement of People

Conference believes that the build-up of legislation and policies throughout public life and public services, for the purpose of targeting individuals for endless immigration checks, amounts to a new level of racism and hostility that undercuts our rights and freedoms and consciously attempts to divide us along racial lines.

The concerted attack on immigration has already degraded life for members and the public service users we work with.

Scapegoating immigrants has served as a distraction and excuse for the deplorable attacks on the social welfare state and public services that past generations fought for.

Scapegoating immigrants was key to the right wing getting the EU referendum of 2016, which then saw open attacks stigmatizing and further scapegoating immigrants. Now Brexit is driving new anti-immigrant legislation and racist xenophobic stigma, beginning with the current plan to end free movement of people.

Conference believes that our members are increasingly either the target of this racist harassment based on their own status as immigrants, or are expected to carry out that harassment as public sector workers, or both.

Conference believes however, that the intention to set up workers against the very communities they serve can in fact backfire and, with unions mobilised on an anti-racist basis fighting for parity for both citizens and non-citizens, it can bring us closer together as a formidable, integrated, conscious movement that can win for all the working class, poor and exploited.

Conference notes that many members have been resisting the pressure to act as proxy immigration enforcement, in schools, universities, hospitals, local government and elsewhere, and it is important they have union backing from all levels.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference notes that although there is still opportunity to defend the freedom to move, the Labour Party has so far conceded ground to the far-right by failing to openly defend free movement of people; a position Conference wants to see changed.

The stigma now surrounding immigration, along with anti-Muslim bigotry, are central to the dangerous growth in racially motivated attacks and division.

The free movement of people has become the ground of attack for the right wing, the most divisive and racist aspect of Brexit, and is ground that must be defended by our movement.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Make defending the free movement of people a priority campaign;
- 2) Seek to work with the National Black Members Committee, other self organised groups and service groups to campaign to end the use of public sector workers as proxy immigration police, for non-cooperation with racist checks, and to defend members who face bullying and pressure over immigration checks.
- 3) Work with Labour Link to consider how we can encourage the Labour Party and other political leaders to defend the free movement of people and strengthen protections for immigrant communities hailing from inside and outside the EU, and take action to dismantle the mechanisms of immigration checks and harassment in the public sector.

SOAS

Northern Ireland

97. Delivering the Promise of the Good Friday Agreement

Conference notes that 10th April marked the 20th Anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement, over 40 years of our trade union campaign for peace and justice and 25 years of unswerving support for that campaign from UNISON, our National Executive Council, our regions and branches.

Conference welcomes that the Agreement has led to relative peace in Northern Ireland in comparison to the years of conflict that preceded it. However Conference also recognises that since the Good Friday Agreement was reached an increasing concern has been regression from its principles and the non-implementation of its provisions, and the provisions of subsequent agreements, relating to equality and human rights. This has been demonstrated by:

- 1) The failure of politicians in Northern Ireland to properly share-power within a framework of equality and human rights, which has left an even more divided and unequal society;
- 2) Policy and resource allocation decisions being taken outside of an equality and human rights framework which have led to persistently high levels of poverty, major inequalities in housing and in peoples' health and educational outcomes, and continuing austerity and welfare cuts;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 3) A series of political crises since 1998;
- 4) The lack of commitment by successive British and Irish Governments to their binding obligations under international law as co-guarantors of the Good Friday Agreement.

Conference expresses deep concern that the Good Friday Agreement has now become a target of those pursuing a 'hard' exit of the UK from the EU. Conference is deeply disturbed at the politicians, including a former Tory Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, advocating the view at this time that the Good Friday Agreement has 'failed' or is 'not sustainable'. Conference believes they do so as they recklessly view dismantling the architecture of the peace process as a price worth paying to achieve their own ideological ambitions. Conference believes that such irresponsible views must be robustly challenged.

Conference believes that a lack of political will from the co-guarantors of the Agreement and from some Northern Ireland parties has led to a regression away from the letter and spirit of the Agreement including:

- a) The failure of the UK Government to bring forward a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland;
- b) Repeated threats by the UK Government to repeal the Human Rights Act 1998;
- c) The lack of a comprehensive process to address the issues faced by victims and survivors and to deal with the past;
- d) The failure of politicians and public bodies to properly implement the statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998;
- e) The failure to implement a Single Equality Bill in Northern Ireland;
- f) The failure to bring forward an Anti-Poverty Strategy in Northern Ireland based on objective need;
- g) The lack of Irish Language legislation;
- h) The continuing use of 'emergency' powers in relation to policing and justice;
- i) The pursuit of a 'hard' exit from the EU by the UK Government, which will undermine key principles of the Good Friday Agreement.

Conference believes that in the years that followed 1998 the opponents of equality and human rights within Northern Ireland were effectively given a veto on progress, as seen through the continuing opposition towards marriage equality, a women's right to choose, and the prevalence of weak or missing commitments to action in relation to promoting equality and human rights for all of the groups covered by section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to support the Northern Ireland region in its continuing campaign to protect the Peace Agreement and secure

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

full implementation. Conference further calls on the National Executive Council, through Labour Link, to press the Labour party to take all actions necessary to protect the Good Friday Agreement, particularly in the context of the UK exit from the EU.

Northern Ireland Region

98. Human rights and equality protections in Northern Ireland

In the light of the recent political difficulties on the restoration of devolved Government in Northern Ireland we face the threat of direct rule via the Tories, some of whom are disgracefully trying to dismiss the Good Friday Agreement for their own ends.

It is fair to say that the vast majority of people in Northern Ireland want devolution to work. To be able to hold Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) and Ministers to account is an important part of the democratic process. Conference will be aware that there is a major obstacle that we in Northern Ireland need to overcome to help restore devolution. One of the key parties in the negotiations has set its mind against equality and human rights for all. It has put this in its past manifestos and has stated that the 'status quo' is important to protect only one section of our population. In fact the opposite is true and this constant battle on equality and human rights is deepening poverty and division, most particularly for working-class people.

Equality and human rights are not under the ownership of any political party in Northern Ireland, but are universal rights which have been at the core of the trade union movement's demands for over a century.

Conference reaffirms its commitment to work wherever it can for the realisation of rights in Northern Ireland, the restoration of devolved Government within a framework of equality and human rights, and the protection of the peace process.

Should direct rule be imposed, there can be no more ambiguity from the UK Government, whether it be Tory, Labour or a coalition. It must immediately fulfil its obligations to bring forward an inclusive, enforceable Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland, which will include the obligations to immediately legislate on issues including an Irish Language Act, abortion rights and equal marriage, all of which are among the most politically contentious issues in our society, but which inside a human rights framework are removed from party political obstruction.

Royal Hospital

Equalities

99. Inclusion in our union – improving equality outcomes

Equality and diversity in our union is vital. Whilst we have a lot to celebrate and are seen at the front edge of equality policy and organising for equality with our self organised groups, there continues to be significant equality developments within our union, across employers and in our members' workplaces.

There are higher proportions of women and people from black and minority ethnic communities in the workforce than ever before. The population is ageing, with many

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

people either intending to or having to stay in work for longer and many trying to juggle work with caring responsibilities. There is greater recognition of the barriers that disabled people have faced in accessing work and in work, and the lack of awareness and discrimination faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people at work remains persistent.

Conference acknowledges that at this time we are making little progress on equality, which is increasingly seen as a luxury in the workplace, with employers barely abiding by the law. We know they can do more to promote equality in the workplace and it is unions who should be holding them to account.

Conference welcomes the annual equality survey of our members which in 2017 had its highest response rate of just under 12,000 responses but is concerned by some of the findings:

- 1) Nearly one-third of respondents said their employer did not keep them informed about its equality policies;
- 2) Nearly 40% of respondents had had not employer-organised equality training, and less than a quarter had had any such training in the past year;
- 3) A quarter of respondents had experience or had witnessed unfair discrimination in their workplace;
- 4) Over 40% of those who did not report an instance of discrimination cited fear of being picked on or being victimised, and well over a third thought the issue would not be taken seriously;
- 5) Only 40% of respondents requiring a reasonable adjustment at work said their employer had implemented it in a speedy and satisfactory manner.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to work with the self organised groups, regions and branches to:

- a) Develop a forward looking equality strategy for the union;
- b) Profile equality within the union, across all its communications strands;
- c) Seek to influence government and the Labour Party on our equality strategy and building a more inclusive society;
- d) Continue to develop guidance for branches on key areas of work on all aspects of equality including inclusive language;
- e) Develop guidance and advice for branches to assist stewards to identify discrimination in the workplace;
- f) Provide guidance to branches and sectors on reviewing employer equality policies, requesting and analysing workplace data (e.g. pay levels, equality training, reasonable adjustments, disciplinary and grievance) and seek to build an inclusive bargaining agenda with employers;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

g) To use the branch Organising Framework to develop equality outcomes.

East Midlands

100. An end to sexual harassment at work

Conference acknowledges that sexual harassment in the workplace is not new. It can affect anyone. Generally perpetrators are those who are in a position of power or perceive they are.

Victims can feel powerless, ashamed, hopeless and scared. They often develop very low self esteem and this often leads them to avoiding the harasser, denying or downplaying the gravity of the situation, attempting to ignore, forget, or simply endure the behaviour.

Reporting levels of sexual harassment are believed to be shockingly low, yet it is a fact that a disproportionate number of victims are women and the majority of perpetrators are men.

Conference welcomes and endorses the fantastic and empowering campaign #metoo and the resurgence of the #timesup campaign. These campaigns may have been born in the USA but the subject is unfortunately still all too real for women here too.

Sexual harassment and attacks against women are not limited to the directors couch or behind film cameras. It takes place in ordinary work places. For too long women have felt disempowered by powerful male decision makers, men who literally hold your job in their hands. The very real fear of being scape-goated, ostracised or sacked means that women simply suffer in silence; they feel they have no other choice.

A study by the TUC in 2016 found that 52% of women had experienced unwanted behaviour at work including groping, sexual advances and inappropriate jokes. Among women and girls aged 16-24, the proportion reporting sexual harassment rose to 63%.

Around one in eight women reported unwanted sexual touching or attempts to kiss them at work, which the report's authors point out would be considered sexual assault under the law.

Almost a fifth said they had been harassed by their boss or someone else with authority over them.

But four in five women said they did not report the incidents to their employers, with many fearing that it would harm their relationships at work or that they would not be taken seriously.

65% of all public sector workers and approx 75% of UNISON members are women. As the trade union that rightly takes pride on its lead in all equality issues, we must take a stand on behalf of these members and ensure their voices heard too.

To do this we must ensure that all activists and branch officers are equipped to support women who wish to report sexual harassment at work. This includes

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

ensuring public sector employers have a public zero tolerance on sexual harassment and adequate policies in place developed to protect those who make claims.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to work with the appropriate UNISON committees to:

- 1) Publically endorse and promote the #metoo and #timesup campaigns;
- 2) Work with the TUC and other public sector trade unions both here and abroad to develop a global trade union campaign against sexual harassment in the workplace;
- 3) Develop a toolkit for activists and branch officers that includes guidance on:
 - a) Negotiating a zero tolerance sexual harassment policy, with appropriate protections and safe reporting routes for victims with our public sector employers;
 - b) How branches should support members who report sexual harassment in the workplace;
 - c) Appropriate external bodies, that branches can signpost victims to, for expert support and counselling outside of the workplace.

North London Mental Health and Community

101. An end to sexual harassment at work

Conference acknowledges that sexual harassment in the workplace is not new. The recent #metoo campaign has started a conversation about unwanted sexual conduct and has empowered women to come forward and share their experiences. Although anyone can experience sexual harassment, a disproportionate number of victims are women and the majority of perpetrators are men. Generally perpetrators are those who are in a position of power or perceive they are.

Conference welcomes and endorses the fantastic #metoo and the resurgence of the #timesup campaign. These campaigns may have been born in the USA but the subject is unfortunately still all too real for women here too.

Sexual harassment and attacks against women are not limited to the director's couch or behind film cameras. It takes place in ordinary work places. For too long women have felt disempowered by influential male decision makers, men who literally hold your job in their hands. There is a very real fear of being blamed, ostracised or sacked that stops women speaking out. They may choose to simply suffer in silence because they feel they have no other choice.

Sexual harassment reporting is shockingly low and many women adopt mechanisms for dealing with unwanted behaviour such as denying or downplaying the gravity of the situation, attempting to ignore, forget, or simply endure it.

Victims can feel powerless, ashamed, hopeless and scared. Conference acknowledges that it is never the victims fault for experiencing unwanted sexual attention, harassment or violence -whatever the circumstances.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

A study by the TUC in 2016 found that 52% of women had experienced unwanted behaviour at work including groping, sexual advances and inappropriate jokes. Among women and girls aged 16-24, the proportion reporting sexual harassment rose to 63%.

Around one in eight women reported unwanted sexual touching or attempts to kiss them at work, which the report's authors point out would be considered sexual assault under the law.

Almost a fifth said they had been harassed by their boss or someone else with authority over them.

But four in five women said they did not report the incidents to their employers, with many fearing that it would harm their relationships at work or that they would not be taken seriously.

65% of all public sector workers and approx 75% of UNISON members are women. As the trade union that rightly takes pride on its lead in all equality issues, we must take a stand on behalf of these members and ensure their voices are heard too.

To do this we must ensure that all activists and branch officers are equipped to support women who wish to report sexual harassment at work. This includes ensuring public sector employers have a public zero tolerance on sexual harassment and adequate policies in place developed to protect those who make claims.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to work with the appropriate UNISON committees to:

- 1) Publically endorse and promote the #metoo and #timesup campaigns;
- 2) Work with the TUC and other public sector trade unions both here and abroad to develop a global trade union campaign against sexual harassment in the workplace;
- 3) Develop a toolkit for activists and branch officers that includes guidance on:
 - a) Negotiating a zero tolerance sexual harassment policy, with appropriate protections and safe reporting routes for victims with our public sector employers;
 - b) How branches should support members who report sexual harassment in the workplace;
 - c) Appropriate external bodies, that branches can signpost victims to, for expert support and counselling outside of the workplace.

Southampton District

102. Disability awareness

Conference welcomes the slight increase in the employment rate of people with disabilities in Scotland and the UK but recognises that in 2016 in Scotland only just over 42% are in work compared over 80% of those without a disability.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Young people with disabilities fare particularly badly and it is estimated that by the time they are 26 they are four times more likely to be unemployed as their non-disabled peers.

Conference welcomes the Disability Confident Scheme, which encourages employers to incorporate plans to increase the level of awareness and understanding of recruitment and selection from all protected characteristics with particular focus on those with a disability, mental health and age.

However, Conference believes that more needs to be done to support staff with a disability in the workplace and to encourage career progression.

Conference welcomes the diversity and equalities training provided by some employers but believes that this needs to be extended to include more specific training and awareness raising on disability particularly for those in management. This should include an understanding of the requirement to make reasonable adjustments to support staff with disabilities in the workplace and to actively encourage them to apply for promoted posts.

Evidence nationally shows that at a time of cuts to council services, those with protected characteristics often bear the brunt, and a move to more draconian Attendance Management policies and procedures can discriminate against those with disabilities and chronic ill-health and can undermine employers' commitments to equalities.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council in conjunction with the National Disabled Members Committee to:

- 1) Lobby the government to meet their commitments under Equalities legislation in relation to all staff with disabilities and to ensure that progress is monitored on a regular basis;
- 2) Call on branches to press employers to deliver more specific training and awareness raising for all staff, but particularly for those in management consistent with the Disability Confident Scheme. This should include training on the legal requirement to make reasonable adjustments to support staff with disabilities in the workplace and to actively encourage them to apply for promoted posts;
- 3) Ensure as far as possible that our members with disabilities have the opportunity to have a voice in the employers' equalities work so that it can be informed by these workers' real experience of work in employment.

Aberdeenshire

103. Equal Marriage = Equal Widowhood

Conference welcomes the Supreme Court decision in Walker v Innospec that, upon John Walker's death, his husband should get the same pension as would his widow.

Conference notes this decision relies upon European Union law and sets aside a provision of the United Kingdom's Equality Act 2010, specifically Paragraph 18 of

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Schedule 9 of the Act, permitting occupational pension schemes to pay benefits to surviving same-sex spouses and civil partners only in respect of contributions made since the introduction of civil partnership in 2005.

Conference affirms UNISON's aim to bring widowers' pension and those for surviving same-sex spouses and civil partners into line with those for widows in all respects.

Conference observes that the Supreme Court decision does not wholly achieve this, so it continues to favour doing so by means of primary domestic legislation.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council:

- 1) To work with the National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Committee, the National Retired Members' Committee, the National Labour Link Committee and others as appropriate to develop a broad-based and sustained campaign to achieve equality, which includes the repeal of Paragraph 18 of Schedule 9 of the Equality Act 2010 by the United Kingdom Parliament;
- 2) To seek to ensure that the Trades Union Congress (TUC) LGBT+ Committee and its Pensioners Committee give the matter regular attention and to raise it, if need be, with the Scottish TUC, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and others as appropriate.

Islington

104. Equal Marriage = Equal Widowhood

Conference welcomes the Supreme Court decision in Walker v Innospec that, upon John Walker's death, his husband should get the same pension as would his widow.

Conference notes this decision relies upon European Union law and has set aside a provision of the United Kingdom's Equality Act 2010 that permitted occupational pension schemes to pay benefits to surviving same-sex spouses and civil partners only in respect of contributions made since the introduction of civil partnership in 2005.

Conference affirms UNISON's aim to bring widowers' pensions and those for surviving same-sex spouses and civil partners into line with those for widows in all respects.

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2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 2) To encourage the Trades Union Congress LGBT+ Committee and its Pensioners' Committee give the matter regular attention and to raise it, if need be, with the Scottish TUC, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and others as appropriate.

City of Wolverhampton

Racism

105.Tackling Xenophobia and the Far Right

Conference notes with deep concern the rise of the far right in the west. A resurgence in organised and violent racist, anti-semitic, misogynist and homophobic politics has profound consequences for all workers. Over the past year, the far right have felt emboldened to organise and connect with each other with negative consequences for vulnerable communities and democratic standards. This has included attempts at organised violence on the streets, on our seas and against democratic politicians. It has flourished online both covertly and in the voicing of unapologetic fascist sentiments and calls to action. It has involved direct legislative attempts to roll back social gains for women, LGBT people, Black communities and disabled people. It has directly targeted trade unions and our attempts to improve conditions in the workplace for working class people of all races and backgrounds.

Conference notes with alarm the rise in racist and xenophobic harassment felt by public service workers over the past year. Conference is also alarmed that the Government has sought to make public service workers an extension of the immigration service, with the explicit aim of creating a 'hostile environment' for migrant workers and their families. It has included compulsory ID checks in NHS England; the checking of patient details on registration with GPs; the sharing of data collected through the 'school census'; new criminal offences of 'working illegally' and renting accommodation to undocumented people. Conference believes that will have widespread detrimental consequences to public health, trust in public services and tackling exploitation and vulnerability in the labour market. It also creates a deeply negative atmosphere in the UK that legitimates harassment and discrimination and dehumanises whole groups of people.

Conference continues to call on the Government to review the 'Prevent' duty, around concerns about the position it places public sector workers and widespread potential for racist discrimination. Conference would like to highlight National Executive Council advice to branches that highlights important legal safeguards under freedom of speech, equality and data protection legislation.

Conference also notes with concern continuing levels of hostility and harassment experienced by Jewish and Muslim people in the UK. 'Tell Mama', which monitors and records attacks on the Muslim community, reported a 47% rise in the number of street-based incidents in 2016. 56% of those suffering street based attacks were women, targeted with both explicit racist and misogynist language. In the first six months of 2017, 767 anti-semitic hate crimes were recorded, a 30% rise in comparison to 2016. This is the highest level recorded since monitoring began 33 years ago. Conference reaffirms its unwavering commitment to tackling Islamophobic and anti-semitic hate crimes.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference believes that tackling racist and xenophobic harassment and bullying in the workplace must continue to be an urgent priority for UNISON. Recent polling by the TUC found that 37% of Black workers polled reported that they have been racially bullied, abused or discriminated against by their employer. This included verbal abuse; racist comments and jokes; bullying and harassment; physical violence; being singled out and treated differently; or discriminated against. Respondents said that they felt isolated and reluctant to complain - over 43% did not feel able to report their experience of discrimination to their employers and 38% did not report incidents of bullying and harassment.

Conference welcomes the work led by our migrant worker member networks and our self organised groups in tackling hate crime, harassment and institutional racism and discrimination. Conference also welcomes the leaflets, training courses and bargaining guides developed for branches in challenging racism and xenophobia.

Conference further welcomes the work led by UNISON's self organised groups to tackle hate crime. In a climate where hate crimes and incidents are on the increase, there is no doubt that they have a direct impact on workplaces and workplace culture. Victims of hate crime are four times more likely to experience depression, post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and/or anxiety. Hate crime is a workplace issue.

UNISON members may have been subjected to or witnessed a hate crime or incident at work or outside of the workplace and not known what to do or lacked confidence in reporting it. Conference believes that promoting awareness of hate crime, encouraging reporting and supporting our members affected by these issues is vital.

Conference further welcomes the activist training materials and the UNISON bargaining support guide published in National Hate Crime Awareness week, October 2017, which explains hate crime and hate incidents and sets out what branches can do, including advice on negotiating a workplace policy on hate crime.

Conference believes that the struggle for equality, social justice and a better world has been at the heart of UNISON's work from our founding, demonstrated by our commitment to tackling the far-right and the politics of hate whether at the ballot box, in our public spaces or at the workplace. It is the foundation of a public service ethos built on the labour of workers of all backgrounds serving all communities.

Conference is deeply concerned that the hatred and prejudice displayed by the Presidency of Donald Trump has the potential to exacerbate racism and community tensions not just in the USA but around the world. Conference welcomes the fact that President Trump did not come to the UK in February this year and reaffirms support for the Stop Trump Coalition and opposition to a state visit to the UK and will support the coalition in mobilising for their demonstration(s) against any planned visit.

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:

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 1) Have a renewed focus on collective bargaining and trade union activity to challenge racism and xenophobia in the workplace and beyond;
- 2) Resist attempts by the Westminster Government to strip away the rights of migrant workers;
- 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 support the 'Stop Trump' coalition and oppose plans for a state visit to the UK;
- 6) Continue to develop, promote and implement training materials and resources in conjunction with self organised groups and branches to challenge discrimination and prejudice;
- 7) Call on regions to run the Hate Crime Awareness training and for branches to negotiate policies within the workplace;
- 8) Continue our work with a wide coalition of anti-racist groups at national and local level to support local community organising against racism and xenophobia, including branches affiliating and working with HOPE not hate, Show Racism the Red Card and Stand up to Racism;
- 9) 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

106. Race Equality Act – How far have we come since 1968?

On 8 December 1965 the first Race Relations Act came into force in Britain. Prior to this, it was legal to discriminate against people because of the colour of their skin, and this act was the first in many equality legislation to promote non-discrimination and equality, the Act was amended in 1968.

This year is a special one because it marks the 50th anniversary of the amended Race Relations Act. Yet many Black workers are asking not how far we have come since then, but how many gains have been reversed in recent years.

We have seen many blatant examples of racism in our society and in our workplaces. In 1960's Britain, Black people were subject to overt and cruel racism, typically captured with the 'No Blacks, No Dogs No Irish' signs erected by white British landlords. At this time Black people had no legal protection from race discrimination, being denied jobs, access to services, and housing were still legal until the 1968 and 1976 Acts.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

The 1968 Act introduced the idea of indirect discrimination which has informed much of subsequent equality legislation today.

Today, Black people are being scapegoated for austerity, they encounter race discrimination in the labour market and beyond, they face disproportionate cuts and austerity and they suffer more from casualisation, zero-hours contracts, low pay and poverty.

Throughout the period surrounding Brexit and the 2017 General election we witnessed an increasingly toxic debate around migration and race, creating an even more hostile environment for migrant and Black workers. As Black people we have contributed positively to British society and supported the public sector.

The most recent equality legislation is the Equality Act 2010 which came into effect from 1 October 2010. This Act, for the first time, gave the UK a single Act of Parliament, requiring equal treatment in access to employment as well as private and public services, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, maternity or pregnancy, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, now known as protected characteristics.

As a union we need to defend Black workers rights and human rights and resist further erosion of our legal rights, to ensure that this and successive governments make progress towards race equality and renew a commitment to race equality at work and the wider society. Black people are experiencing increasing levels of race discrimination, disadvantage and under-representation in the labour market, service provision and wider society.

Current legislation means Black LGBT migrant workers or people seeking asylum in the UK are entitled to an assessment of potential breach of their human rights, including the risk of them being deported. This assessment engages Article 3, Prohibition of torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and Article 8, Right to respect for private and family life. Yet the threshold of evidence connected with the risks of being Black and LGBT in some countries outside the UK is so high that these assessments are almost without worth.

At a time when we need more legislation and rights, there is major concern regarding the absence of focus on race equality particularly given the growing inequality for UNISON Black Members, their families and communities. Since 2010, we have seen an erosion of equality legislation, seen as nothing but 'red tape' by the previous coalition and the current Tory government.

The creation of the 1965 Act and subsequent amendments was intended to outlaw discrimination and give equal rights to Black people, yet we have seen very little improvement over the past 50 years. Young Black males continue to have the highest rate of unemployment, young people continue to be failed by the education system, there remains a massive health inequality between Black and White people, higher numbers of Black people will be housed in poor/substandard accommodation, and the criminal justice system is over-represented by Black people who receive consistently higher sentences. Fifty years on from the Act we should ask whether we need more legislation, more effective policy implementation or more civil society action to finally achieve racial equality in Britain in the 21st century.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Work by UNISON's Strategic Organising Unit with migrant members highlights the almost impossible task of gaining permanent residence as there is an income threshold of £35,000. This is not a combined household or family income but has to be earned by one individual. Conference is fully aware that most migrant workers are in low paid work that is often zero hours or temporary. This further undermines and exacerbates difficulties for Black LGBT people who are already experiencing high levels of stress.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Engage with the Self-organised groups and the National Service groups to highlight the issues and promote the challenging racism in the workplace guidance and training materials for branches and regions on how to bargain for equality;
- 2) Liaise with the National Labour Link Committee to highlight these issues with Labour Party MP's and office holders and address this through the Labour manifesto;
- 3) Utilise reports that highlight race inequalities in the workplace to hold public bodies to account;
- 4) Call on the Strategic Organising Unit to develop its work with LGBT migrants.
- 5) Continue to campaign against all forms of racism and discrimination in the workplace and wider community.

National Black Members' Committee

107. Stand Up to Racism

Conference notes:

- 1) May's government is weak but nasty. It depends on the DUP to survive;
- 2) We are seeing a growth in the racist and sometimes fascist right from Trump's election in the US to the electoral successes for the Front National in France, the AfD (Alternative for Germany) and the Freedom Party in Austria;
- 3) There has been a worrying rise in hate crimes, racist, Islamophobic and anti-Semitic attacks;
- 4) The Tories use of EU citizen's rights as a bargaining chip in the Brexit negotiations;
- 5) The deaths of Rashan Charles, Edson DaCosta and Darren Cumberbatch and the Grenfell disaster outline the ongoing reality of institutional racism. BAME people in Britain face discrimination in the justice system, employment, education and housing;
- 6) Thousands of refugees still face death fleeing war and poverty, while the Tories continue to scapegoat refugees and migrants. They are blamed for overstretched public services instead of the real culprit – austerity;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 7) The growth in support for Jeremy Corbyn and his stand against racism. Both he and SNP First Minister Nicola Sturgeon spoke at the Govanhill against Racism Carnival in August 2017, opposing any attempts to demonise and scapegoat the local Roma community.

Conference believes:

- a) We need to build a mass anti-racist movement. The Stand Up To Racism national demonstrations in London, Glasgow and Cardiff, linked to many more protests across Europe on United Nations Day, can play an important part in strengthening that movement;
- b) Any visit by Trump to Britain must be met with mass protests which we should encourage all trade union members to support.

Conference resolves:

- i) To encourage branches to affiliate to Stand Up To Racism, publicise its initiatives to our members and send a representative to sit on its local committees.

City of Glasgow

108. Stand Up To Racism

Conference notes:

- 1) Theresa May's government is weak but nasty, and the Tories continue to use the future of EU citizens as a bargaining chip in Brexit negotiations;
- 2) We are seeing a growth in the racist and sometimes fascist right from Trump's election in the US to the electoral successes for the Front National in France, the AfD (Alternative for Germany) and the Freedom Party in Austria;
- 3) That anti-migrant rhetoric has led to and opens the door to the growth of racism, Islamophobia and anti-semitism;
- 4) Figures released in 2017 by the Mayor of London, showed a fivefold increase in Islamophobic attacks in the few days after the attack at London Bridge in June 2017, and a 40% increase in racist incidents. This increase in recorded Islamophobic incidents is greater than it was after the 2013 murder of Lee Rigby and after the 2015 attacks in Paris;
- 5) The deaths of Rashan Charles, Edson DaCosta and Darren Cumberbatch and the Grenfell disaster outline the ongoing reality of institutional racism. Black people in Britain face discrimination in the justice system, employment, education and housing;
- 6) Thousands of refugees still face death fleeing war and poverty, while the Tories continue to blame them for overstretched public services instead of the real culprit – austerity.

Conference believes:

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- a) That in this context, supporting events such as the March Against Racism on UN anti-racism day, 17 March 2018 is essential;
- b) Organising our members is an important part of building resistance to racism, including institutional racism.

Conference resolves to:

- i) Continue to support to Stand Up To Racism;
- ii) Publicise Stand Up To Racism events and activities amongst our members.

Salford City

109. Islamophobia and Prevent

Conference notes:

- 1) The government's Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a statutory requirement on public bodies and 'specified authorities' – including universities – to 'prevent people being drawn into terrorism' and to implement the 'Prevent' agenda;
- 2) Under Prevent, teachers/lecturers have been known to report students as being 'at risk of radicalisation' for merely taking an interest in political affairs in class, or for observing their religion more closely, whilst politically active students have found themselves visited by counter-terrorism officers.

Conference believes:

- a) The government's counter-terrorism/security policy is fundamentally flawed in its approach; its operant concepts of 'extremism' and 'radicalism' are ill-defined and open to abuse for political ends;
- b) The Act further criminalises Muslims and Black people, and comes amidst a campaign of fear and demonisation from the government;
- c) Islamophobia is massively on the rise across Europe, and is often state-sponsored and legitimised by the mainstream media;
- d) The Prevent agenda, as part of the government's 'anti-extremism' work has been used to create an expansive surveillance architecture to spy on the public and to police dissent, systematically targeting Black people and Muslims;
- e) The government's identified 'warning signs' of "radicalisation" problematise and renders suspect those with mental health difficulties;
- f) That the Act could serve to isolate many Muslims who already feel that the only avenue through which the government will engage them is 'anti-radicalisation' initiatives, resulting in further alienation and disaffection;
- g) The Act discourages free expression and analysis of ideas. Academics, as well as anyone in a public sector job, should not have to be part of this surveillance;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- h) That public services workers should not be asked to undertake surveillance;
- i) The implementation of the Prevent Strategy will not only isolate Muslims but undermine the civil liberties of other groups such as environmental, political and humanitarian activists.

Conference further notes that the National Union of Students (NUS) and University and Colleges Union (UCU) have both passed motions at their conferences opposing the Act and Prevent.

Conferences resolves that UNISON:

- i) Opposes the Prevent strategy and will join with other bodies in calling for the duty to be scrapped;
- ii) Should work with all trade unions, on combating the Prevent strategy and its implementation;
- iii) Should educate members on the dangers of the CTSA and the Prevent Strategy;
- iv) Should provide access to materials used to train staff and students, holding consultations with our members regarding what effect this policy is having;
- v) Should organise Islamic Awareness training, nationally produce materials which tackle the myths and stereotypes around Islam and produce articles in our publications which tackles the myths and misconceptions around Islam.

Salford City

Decentralisation

110.English and Yorkshire devolution

Conference accepts that:

- 1) It's just over three years since the Northern Powerhouse concept was announced by George Osborne. After a meandering start, talks are now gathering pace;
- 2) We know what the Northern Powerhouse is; the idea that better linked, better connected northern cities become bigger than the sum of their parts. An economic force to match the south-east. The tricky part is working out how to make happen;
- 3) Many local authorities are facing an existential crisis as a result of the government's continuing austerity agenda;
- 4) Yorkshire and Humberside workers receive an income that is 80% that of the national average. They also receive £300 per head less in terms of public spending, which results in education and health outcomes lagging behind those of more prosperous regions;
- 5) Inequality in transport spending between north and south continue at unprecedented levels with London set to receive at least 10 times more

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

investment than Yorkshire and other northern Regions. Because of that, the Yorkshire transport system is out of date, unreliable and expensive. Each with its own precept and fares structure, making short journeys such as the 20 min trip from Doncaster to York prohibitively expensive;

- 6) The local authorities, Trade Unions and Business Organisation in the North, but particularly in Yorkshire have formed what they are calling a “coalition of the willing” in August 2017 to work towards a wider Yorkshire model that encompassed all Councils across Yorkshire and the Humber. But also to develop a Northern approach across the North West, Northern and Yorkshire Regions to this end Conference recognises the unity of voices calling for a wider Yorkshire model, including business and trade unions in recognising the distinct global brand that is one Yorkshire;
- 7) It is also recognised that what is good for one part of the country may not suit other parts;
- 8) We support the principles of devolution of budgets and decision making from central Government to regional/local level and agree that any final devolution model for regional or local areas must be determined regionally/locally as appropriate.

Conference therefore believes that:

- a) A wider Yorkshire combined authority directing investment decisions and using its purchasing power to negotiate with transport providers would address that lack of integration, improve bus and rail services and promote growth and leverage in further investment is essential;
- b) In light of the EU exit vote it is of vital importance we secure inward investment and trade agreements for Yorkshire, other parts of the North of England, and that our vision of a devolution model that will unlock investment and build confidence by combining the advanced manufacturing of South Yorkshire with the energy hub and ports of Humberstone, the tourism and agriculture of the North with the financial and manufacturing centres of West Yorkshire;
- c) It would be wrong and ill fated for the Tory Government to ignore the will of the vast majority of Doncaster and Barnsley people. People in Barnsley and Doncaster would rightly feel disenfranchised and ignored in light of their 85% majority vote in favour of a Yorkshire deal;
- d) Welcomes the Parliamentary debate on Yorkshire devolution led by Dan Jarvis MP and the compromise proposals he put forward around an interim two year deal to allow a South Yorkshire deal to progress but allow for those Councils to form part of a larger devolution deal across the whole of Yorkshire from 2020;
- e) The previous National Conference decisions on English devolution that the National Executive Council provides a framework of support, advice and principles and that whether UNISON supports, opposes or is neutral on any final devolution proposal is a matter for the UNISON Region concerned.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference therefore resolves to:

- i) Support the UNISON Yorkshire and Humberside campaign for a whole Yorkshire devolution deal with one mayoral authority across the whole of Yorkshire and the Humber with responsibility for economic development, transport, skills and training and the environment;
- ii) Support the move to a one county deal by engaging positively with local authorities, business leaders and third sector organisations to construct a devolved model authority for Yorkshire by 2020;
- iii) Encourage the TUC and region to play a positive role in representing working people in the structures of the new devolved authority making sure that public sector jobs and services are run by the public for the public, and that employers are encouraged to provide high quality employment standards in the public and private sector using procurement to improve conditions, training/skills and apprenticeships and well-being;
- iv) Call for the adoption of a new default position for all public contracts. These contracts should only go to open tender where it is not possible for them to be directly provided by government at a national, regional or local level;
- v) Demand that the responsibilities of any devolved authority be provided with the finance from central government needed to properly pay for those responsibilities and that a proper evaluation of those costs be provided before any new authority is set up;
- vi) Ask the National Executive Council to convene UNISON Regions to discuss devolution across the whole of the UK.

Sheffield Teaching Hospitals

111.English and Yorkshire Devolution

Conference resolves to:

- 1) Support the UNISON Yorkshire and Humberside campaign for a whole Yorkshire devolution deal with one regional authority across the whole of Yorkshire and the Humber with responsibility for economic development, transport, skills and training and the environment;
- 2) Support the move to a one county deal by engaging positively with local authorities, business leaders and third sector organisations to construct a devolved model authority for Yorkshire by 2020;
- 3) Encourage the TUC, particularly the regional TUC, and region to play a positive role in representing working people in the structures of the new devolved authority making sure that public sector jobs and services are run by the public for the public, and that employers are encouraged to provide high quality employment standards in the public and private sector using procurement to improve conditions, training/skills and apprenticeships and well-being;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 4) Call for the adoption of a new default position for all public contracts. These contracts should only go to open tender where it is not possible for them to be directly provided by government at a national, regional or local level;
- 5) Demand that the responsibilities of any devolved authority be provided with the finance from central government needed to properly pay for those responsibilities and that a proper independently assessed and verified evaluation of those costs, which takes account of the views of all the local authorities in the region, be provided before any new authority is set up;
- 6) Ask the National Executive Council to convene UNISON regions to discuss devolution across the whole of the UK – including a review of the ‘Metro Mayor’ model of devolution and to explore other alternative, more democratic and sustainable models for the future.

West Yorkshire Transport

Environment

112.Campaign for Climate Change Resilience Strategy and Funding for Climate Change Resilient public services

Conference recognises that the governments of the British Isles urgently need to establish national, regional and local public sector infrastructure Climate Change Resilience Strategies and put funding programmes in place to prevent the loss of key services and the associated impacts upon our communities.

Conference notes that putting profits before people has resulted in the Climate Change crisis that is sweeping the world. UNISON members their families and communities are on the frontline of this crisis.

Public services rely on an infrastructure that was developed in the nineteenth and early twentieth century and is particularly sensitive to the problems we now see happening more and more frequently as heavy rain, strong winds and higher tides disrupt transport, power and water supplies. Droughts and storms elsewhere in the world threaten food availability and food security, the last thing people on low incomes need in food bank Britain.

Guidance and funding for public sector infrastructure that fails to plan for climate change is planning to fail its service users.

The climate change crisis is affecting UNISON members as they struggle to deliver and maintain services within an infrastructure that is not geared up to the rapidly changing weather.

Climate change damage to public sector infrastructure has to be met from the organisation’s reserves! A cash strapped public sector cannot afford to plan for infrastructure damage, struggles to have enough staff to cope with the emergency and has to beg for additional money to repair the damage. Our members and the people of the British Isles need and deserve climate change ready public services.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference recognises that the Paris Agreement to reduce the use of fossil fuels needs urgent action in order to address the rise in global temperatures that is causing climate change.

Climate change will exacerbate inequality in our society as those least able to afford it face more flooding events, disrupted transport, power supplies, health care and food supplies.

Climate change has the potential to marginalise people, break up families and ruins communities.

A twenty first century public sector led climate change resilience strategy with supporting programmes for building resilient infrastructure linked into changing lifestyles will deliver a more resilient and equal society.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Engage fully with our members, and civic society across the UK to seek support for a Climate Change Resilience Strategy and public sector infrastructure funding programme;
- 2) Engage with the TUC, Scottish and Welsh Trades Union Councils, environmental groups and the People's Assembly to build a broad coalition to support a campaign for Climate Change Resilient public services infrastructure.

Aberdeenshire

113.Global warming and climate change

Conference welcomes the publication of the UNISON guide on campaigning to divest pension funds from fossil fuels. This is an important campaign to protect our pension investments and to contribute to the transition to a low carbon economy.

Conference recognises the threat of catastrophic climate change as a result of global warming from the release of carbon into the atmosphere.

Conference welcomes the Scottish government's decision to establish a Just Transition Commission, including trade union representatives, to develop industrial strategies that will prioritise investment and create jobs in a low carbon economy and calls on similar bodies and policies to be developed at a UK level.

Conference recognises that a huge effort will be needed to reduce carbon emissions and that individuals and organisations like UNISON have to ensure that they are contributing to the needed change and not being a contributor to the problem.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Review its own carbon footprint and update its policies and procedures to reduce carbon use with an aim to be carbon neutral within a set number of years;
- 2) Produce guidance on how branches can reduce their carbon use;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 3) Produce guidance on how to negotiate with employers to reduce their carbon use.

South Lanarkshire

114.Reduce plastic pollution

Conference recognises the huge public and international concern over the amount of plastic that is dumped in the sea and land and the impact that has on the environment and wildlife including the food chain.

We call on governments to take decisive action to reduce the use of plastic and to manage the existing waste in a way that does not harm the environment.

Conference recognises that UNISON is part of the problem in its use of plastic in its promotional material and that it can and should be part of the solution.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Take steps to reduce UNISON's use of non-recyclable plastic in its offices and branches, producing an action plan for the 2019 National Delegate Conference;
- 2) Develop guidance for branches to raise awareness of the issue with members and to enable them to challenge employers to reduce their use of plastic;
- 3) Work with our suppliers to reduce the use of single use plastic items and move to alternative biodegradable and reusable items for all promotional material.

South Lanarkshire

Health

115.Wholly Owned Subsidiary Companies (WOC's)

In the Yorkshire & Humberside region, NHS Hospital Trusts in Harrogate, South and West Yorkshire are currently pursuing a policy of creating their own private companies to carry out their estates and facilities work on a contractual basis. The companies are known as either SPV's (Special Purpose Vehicles) or WOC's (Wholly Owned subsidiary Companies). We are aware that these companies are being set up all over the country.

It appears that the driver for these companies is cost savings. No claims have been made that services will be improved. To the contrary we believe that the services will fragment and the quality of care will be compromised.

Our members are to be TUPE'd into the WOC's and we believe that they will be vulnerable to attacks on their terms and conditions, with new staff being employed on inferior terms and conditions where sick pay, holidays and pensions are slashed to the bare minimum, thus creating a two tier workforce.

It is the creation of this two tier workforce and the fragmentation of our NHS which makes this an issue for all of us rather than just the health care service group. All the evidence shows that a two tier workforce with the associated fragmentation of the workforce has a negative impact on the quality of the care provided to us as patients.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

The chaos we are seeing in our hospitals has been created by the choices made by a very vindictive Tory government that wants to break up the NHS. This is yet a further step towards this goal.

These newly created companies will only bring further chaos and disaster with them. When we saw cleaners outsourced in many hospitals we saw MRSA outbreaks going through the roof. These WOC companies further down the line could potentially be sold to the likes of Virgin.

Conference believes that this is an attack on the whole ethos of our NHS and that it will lead to further break up of the NHS.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to work with the Service Group and the Labour Link and other appropriate parts of the union to oppose these moves at every level.

North Yorkshire

116.Say No to SPV's

Conference notes with great concern the rapid growth in the formation of Special Purpose Vehicles (SPV's) within the NHS. In the Yorkshire and Humberside region alone at least 10 acute Trusts have set up or are considering setting up companies, often described as being "outside the NHS", into which thousands of NHS employees could be transferred.

Conference condemns the secrecy surrounding the formation of the SPV's, which is usually outside the established local negotiating procedures and with Trade Union access to outline and final business cases denied on the grounds of "commercial confidentiality".

We note from the experience of colleagues in local government, education and universities that SPV's are often used as preparation for full blown privatisation or tendering at a later date.

Conference believes that the setting up of these companies by NHS employers is a blatant attempt to save money by avoiding paying both VAT to HMRC and Agenda for Change terms and conditions to NHS staff and future employees.

As is the case in West Yorkshire where the West Yorkshire Association of Acute Trusts (WYATT) are proposing that a multi-Trust SPV is formed, the employers are often collaborating over the formation of larger SPV's including more services, department and jobs. This if allowed to happen will lead to more and more jobs and services being privatised.

A national campaign against SPV's across the public sector is therefore necessary to counter the threat to our members jobs, terms and conditions.

Conference resolves:

- 1) To encourage the coordination of UNISON branches and staff sides within the regions to work together to dispute and resist the spread of SPV's;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 2) To support branch campaigns against SPV's and members who vote for lawful industrial action in defence of their NHS contracts;
- 3) Campaign for the return of existing SPV's back into their respective national terms and conditions;
- 4) Continue to expose the lack of transparency and accountability of the SPV's and the potential tax avoidance that has been used to justify their establishment by senior NHS managers.

Mid Yorkshire Health

117.Campaign against NHS arms length companies

Conference is alarmed at the spread of new NHS arm length companies being set up in England. Potentially employing thousands of staff these companies seek to exploit a VAT loophole to reduce their operating costs. Though owned by local NHS trusts they in future could bring in cheap labour and deny pension scheme access to new starters.

However, Conference's gravest concern is that these wholly owned subsidiary companies could easily be sold off to the highest bidder and lead to even greater privatisation of NHS services for UK citizens.

Conference salutes UNISON members in Wigan, Yeovil, Gloucester, Bristol, Airedale, Harrogate and Huddersfield, to name but a few, who have been fighting these proposals this year. They have been driven by what they have seen of publicly owned arms length companies operating already in Local Government, social care, and education across the UK and other privatisation vehicles.

Conference reaffirms its fundamental support for public services provided by public servants on a not-for profit basis and based on social need.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with the Health Care Service Group to campaign nationally against new NHS arms length companies as a real privatisation threat;
- 2) Campaign to ensure public services, particularly the NHS, like Local Government and many charity and voluntary organisations are exempt from VAT and close any VAT tax loophole which may exist for private companies to raise funds for public services;
- 3) Work with health service group in supporting local negotiations;
- 4) Support local branches involved in such campaigns.

Sheffield Teaching Hospitals

118.Campaign against NHS arms length companies

Conference is alarmed at the spread of new NHS arm length companies being set up in England. Potentially employing thousands of staff these companies seek to exploit a VAT loophole to reduce their operating costs. Though owned by local NHS

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

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Conference reaffirms its fundamental support for public services provided by public servants on a not-for profit basis and based on social need.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign nationally against new NHS arms length companies as a real privatisation threat;
- 2) Campaign to close the VAT tax loophole to raise funds for public services;
- 3) Work with health service group in supporting local negotiations;
- 4) Support local branches involved in campaigns.

Humberside Police

119.UK Mental Health Care needs investment

In the Care Quality Commissions report 'The State of Care in Mental Health Services 2014-2017', there are some alarming findings. The report raises concerns relating to; the safety of services, access and waiting times and poor clinical information systems.

This is compounded by increased demand, a lack of trained psychiatric nursing staff and a lack of funding. A consistent theme across the UK is extensive waiting times for child and adolescent mental health care and acute service provision.

What we sow today we reap tomorrow, since 2010 the number of psychiatric nurses in England and Wales has fallen by 12% and surveyed staff in Scotland have reported similar pressures due to staffing shortages and funding cuts. With a 4 year wait in delivering suitably trained staff something has to give.

Where standards have fallen, we witness violence and tragedy which affects families and communities. In Scotland we have seen an increase in violent crime attributed in part to acute mental health problems amongst a minority of sufferers and problems exacerbated by an inability of services to cope with the complexity of historic patterns of poor mental health, alcohol and drug abuse. Scotland is also experiencing the sharpest increase in suicide rates for 8 years. This places a massive burden of increased demand on local government, police and custody in

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

addition to our medical services. The current climate has been described as a pandemic which requires urgent action.

It is vital we learn from the experiences of families and sufferers to improve public awareness, community services and the response across frontline emergency services.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign and lobby for increased funding for mental health care providers and frontline practitioners;
- 2) For the promotion and provision of staff trained in mental health first aid across all medical health, public service providers.

Police Staff Scotland

120.Hospital Car Parking Charges - A Stealth Tax

Conference is pleased to note the free hospital car parking available in Scotland and Wales because of the decisions of their respective governments.

In Northern Ireland the situation varies from free parking in some Trust areas to charges levied by others. In our own branch, after a long campaign, we have finally ended PFI car parking and returned it in-house, although we had also negotiated subsidies for staff and visitors over the years. Our preference is for a consistent model of free car parking across all sites.

The worst situation prevails throughout most of the NHS in England and consequently this conference is alarmed at the rising cost of hospital car parking charges for staff, patients and relatives and considers this a stealth tax on being sick or working for the NHS. For patients and their families in particular, due to the uncertain length of stay this can be an expensive and stressful experience.

Conference resolves to:

- 1) Continue to campaign against hospital car parking charges in England and were applicable, in Northern Ireland;
- 2) Highlight the rising cost to patients and relatives in the media.

Royal Hospital

Education

121.Education is a Public Service

Conference believes in a fully funded, publicly delivered lifelong learning education system which is fully accessible to all regardless of age or economic status.

Education is the lifeblood of a fair and successful society. It is an engine of economic success and a vehicle for tackling inequality and delivering social justice. However, conference is acutely aware that government funding cuts and poor policy decisions have blighted the education sector in recent years. The pursuit of political ideology

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

and dogma has led to an increasing fragmentation of education systems and diminished democratic accountability.

Conference is clear that disparity in resources hinders social mobility.

Whilst only 7% of pupils attend private schools they are disproportionately represented in government, the legal profession, medicine and journalism. UNISON believes that all pupils should have the right to high quality education regardless of where they attend school.

There is clear evidence that investment in early years leads to improvements in social mobility. Unfortunately, increased entitlement to free childcare has not been matched by the necessary increases in funding. Consequently, this conference is deeply concerned that there has not been the necessary increase in the workforce to deliver the additional hours, or sufficient investment in pay or professional development. Additionally, this conference is outraged that other support systems such as Sure Start Centres, which provide one stop services for disadvantaged families, have continued to close.

Radical restructuring of schools in England has seen an increase in the number of academies and multi-academy trusts (MATs) despite the evidence that overall they are no better than equivalent maintained schools and certainly not the panacea that the government has claimed. Too many MATs have expanded too quickly, eliminated any democratic accountability and in a few instances been party to fraud and corruption.

Conference notes that despite clear evidence that Grammar Schools increase the social divide and benefit more affluent parents who can play the system, these schools continue to flourish in Northern Ireland and parts of England, with some in government seeking to expand them. Disabled students have also not thrived under selective admissions policies.

Since 2010, real terms cuts in school funding across the UK has led to significant job losses and outsourcing of support services. A UNISON Scotland study showed that around 20% of support staff jobs have gone since 2010, whilst in England there have been cuts of around 8% in Teaching Assistants since 2013. Job cuts have also hit Cymru/ Wales and Northern Ireland. Remaining staff have a greatly increased workload and an expanded range of duties to perform. A UNISON survey of school office staff – a shockingly undervalued group - reported that 87% were concerned at their increased workload.

Careers services have also been hit by funding cuts. There have seen different approaches by different governments with Cymru/Wales centralising and nationalising their service, whilst Scotland has sought to maintain a qualified and professional service. England passed responsibility for careers services from the independent Connexions service to schools, but without necessary funding and weakly supported by a number of disjointed overlapping national organisations. UNISON continues to argue that face to face independent and impartial careers advice and guidance is essential and that web based replacement services will not do.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

The further education has seen the most disruption. As the so called Cinderella of Education, it is subject to lesser public scrutiny and ministers who have little knowledge of the sector. Thus governments have subjected the sector to constant change: for example, in England since the early 1980's, there have been 28 major pieces of FE legislation overseen by 48 different ministers. The frenetic change, constant reorganisation and the heaviest funding cuts in education has taken its toll, with widespread job losses and course closures. The removal of Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) has hit participation and completion rates in the sector and the recent removal of the NHS bursary is on course to do the same for the training of nursing and allied health professionals; UNISON remains committed to the eradication of student fees and free access to higher education (HE). Conference commends the Scottish Government for maintaining free access to full time undergraduate higher education but recognises that even in Scotland not all HE is free. And in Wales the Government plans to establish the return of student maintenance grants. There needs to be a comprehensive review of funding in order to ensure HE is properly funded without loading students with huge personal debts or undermining the current funding available to universities.

Higher Education also suffers from weak governance, which has seen huge increases in Vice Chancellor and senior manager pay, whilst the majority of staff have had low pay rises. Recent changes in legislation in Scotland has enshrined the role of Trade Union representatives, election of Chairs and increased student representation on governing boards are an example of good practice that should be extended to other parts of the UK.

Conference welcomes the Labour Party policy proposal for a new National Education Service in England that would provide a cradle to grave opportunity for equal access to education but conference notes that this would need to come with significant additional funding in order to succeed.

In light of the above, conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to campaign for:
 - a) Increased education funding, particularly in early years;
 - b) An end to the academies and free school programmes with a move back to a coherent local education system and national education services appropriate to each UK country;
 - c) The abolition of grammar schools and of charitable status for private schools;
 - d) Effective and engaged social partnership structures in all countries and at local levels including democratic accountability and a new role for local authorities in delivering and overseeing early years and school education and closer engagement with post 16 education;
 - e) An end to the low pay and low status culture for school support staff;
 - f) An end to outsourcing of education services;
 - g) A face to face independent and impartial careers advice and guidance service;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- h) The Education Maintenance Allowance, the NHS bursary and fully funded disabled student allowance.
- 2) No further restructuring or new types of education establishment and a period of stability in education policy;
- 3) Continue to support the union's branches and Regions engaged in standing up the cuts and marketisation agenda of this Westminster government;
- 4) Work with service groups to promote school support staff negotiating bodies to negotiate pay and conditions as appropriate to each UK country;
- 5) Work with the political funds, other unions and the WTUC, STUC and ICTU to fight for a democratically accountable, publicly funded, comprehensive education system.

National Executive Council

Social Policy

122.Cuts To Our Safety Net

Conference notes that the July 2015 Budget announced a wide range of cuts to in-work benefits, totalling billions of pounds, as part of a policy since the banking crisis of cutting the incomes of some of the poorest people. These include:

- 1) From April 2016 reducing the threshold for Working Tax Credit (WTC) and Working tax Credit/Child Tax Credit (WTC/CTC) from £6,420 to £3,850;
- 2) From April 2016 increasing the benefit withdrawal taper when pay rises from 41% to 48%;
- 3) Freezing working age benefits, tax credits and local housing allowance for 4 years from 2016/17;
- 4) Reducing work allowances in Universal Credit (UC);
- 5) The Benefit Cap reducing to £23,000 in London and £20,000 outside (including Child Benefit);
- 6) Restricting tax credits to 2 children from April 2017 for new births and new claims in Universal Credit;
- 7) From April 2017 - Removing family element in tax credits and UC and family premium in Housing Benefit for new claims.

These reductions are in addition to the major reductions in support for disabled people who have been disproportionately affected particularly through the loss of the Severe Disability Premium and the changes that have accompanied the replacement of Disability Living Allowance with Personal Independence Payments (PIP). People rely on PIP to get to work and struggle to keep their job if it is cut.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference further notes that after the 2015 Budget UNISON played an important role in the campaign that resulted in the Chancellor abandoning some of the cuts to tax credits that affected 3 million households in work, many of them UNISON members.

Conference recognises that despite this important success, the changes affecting disabled people and many of the changes announced in July 2015 have been implemented and that people who rely on in work benefits to make ends meet face significant reductions to their household income. At the same time there has been an increase in ill health and suicides amongst those affected by benefit cuts. This environment is not helped by sections of the media demonising, blaming and scapegoating those claiming state benefits as 'scrounges' and 'shirkers' to justify cuts.

Furthermore the freeze on Local Housing Allowance is creating a situation where members who are already unable to access either the owner occupied sector or social housing can now only access an ever reducing proportion of the private rented sector where they can afford to rent.

Conference agrees with former Prime Minister John Major, that Universal Credit, as currently designed, is "operationally messy, socially unfair and unforgiving".

The operation of Universal Credit not only creates unnecessary hardship and drives people into debt; it can also result in families being unable to feed their children or heat their homes and creates destitution.

Conference also rejects the two-child limit that breaks the link between the assessment of children's needs and the support they receive and the 'rape clause' that accompanies it. Under this policy, some children are held to be less deserving of a decent standard of living than others, simply because they have more siblings, the date on which they were born or the date on which their family needed state support.

Government claims that increases in the National Minimum Wage result in a pay rise for the lowest paid are particularly misleading as they have to be seen within the context of the combined effect of the personal tax allowances, National Insurance and the work allowance and tapers within Universal Credit.

The biggest gainer from increases to the National Minimum Wage has been HM Treasury through the combined effect of increases in income tax and National Insurance receipts and reductions in expenditure on state benefits.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to campaign to end in-work poverty and for:

- a) social security system that ends poverty for those in and out of work and the reversal of the cuts set out in the July 2015 Budget;
- b) Significant changes to the operational model of Universal Credit and in particular increasing the work allowance because it is the most effective way of increasing the household incomes of the lowest paid;
- c) The repeal of the two child limit;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- d) Changes to the PIP assessment process, the removal of private contractors and changes to the PIP decision making process that will ensure that disabled people are not discriminated against and denied the assistance they need;
- e) Changes to the system of local housing allowances that make the private rented sector more affordable, raise standards and prevent landlords making windfall profits alongside a major social housing building programme.

Conference further calls on the National Executive Council to develop this campaign through a communication and media strategy, briefings and materials, working with voluntary sector and other civil society organisations to achieve a popular consensus for change and focussing on decision makers at all levels of government.

National Executive Council

123.Social Security for All

Conference notes the wide range of reductions to social security for working households announced in the July 2015 Budget by the Westminster government:

- 1) From April 2016 reduce the threshold for Working Tax Credit (WTC) and Working tax Credit/Child Tax Credit (WTC/CTC) from £6,420 to £3,850 (cuts £2.88 billion in 2016/17);
- 2) This change implied that the threshold for CTC only claims would be reduced from £16,105 to £12,125;
- 3) From April 2016 Increase the taper from 41% to 48% (cuts £475 billion in 2016/17);
- 4) Freeze working age benefits, tax credits and local housing allowance for 4 years from 2016/17 (cuts £4 billion by 2020/21);
- 5) Reduce work allowances in Universal Credit (cuts £3.19 billion by 2020/21);
- 6) Benefit Cap reduced to £23,000 in London £20,000 outside (includes Child Benefit) – (cuts £495m by 2020/21);
- 7) Restrict tax credits to 2 children from April 2017 for new births and new claims in Universal Credit (cuts £1.365 million by 2020/21);
- 8) From April 2017 - Remove family element in tax credits and UC and family premium in HB for new claims (cuts £675m by 2020/21).

Conference further notes that the research published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission in November 2017 that shows the disproportionate impact of tax and welfare reforms since 2010 on ethnic minority households, households with one or more disabled member, lone parents and women and that the evidence completely contradicts the claim made by George Osborne MP.

“Too often when countries undertake major consolidations... it is the poorest – those who had least to do with the cause of the economic misfortunes – who are hit hardest. Perhaps that has been a mistake that our country has made in the past.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

This Coalition Government will be different.” Right Honorable George Osborne MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Emergency Budget, June 22nd 2010.

Conference is appalled by the findings in the report of the Work and Pensions Select Committee demonstrating the complete distrust that disabled people now have in the system.

Conference further notes that the migration of existing legacy benefits – Tax Credits, Housing Benefit etc – will begin in 2019 with significant implications for the jobs of UNISON members employed by local authorities working in Housing Benefit sections.

Conference welcomes the role played by UNISON in the campaign that resulted in the Chancellor abandoning cuts to Tax Credits in early 2016 that affected 3 million households in work, many of them UNISON members.

Conference notes the growing areas of discretion in social security matters the Scottish Government has as a result of recent legislation.

Conference now calls on the National Executive Council to campaign for:

- a) The abolition of the two child limit and as a consequence the ‘rape clause’;
- b) The abolition of the bedroom tax;
- c) The re-instatement of work allowances within Universal Credit;
- d) Proper role for local authorities within the delivery of Universal Credit;
- e) Changes to the Universal Credit eligibility criteria for free school meals and NHS prescriptions to attack child poverty and ill health;
- f) Changes to Universal Credit that have the effect of re-instating the severe disability premium within Universal Credit;
- g) Major changes to the assessment process for Personal Independence Payments so that they secure the trust and confidence of disabled people and the removal of private sector companies in the process of assessment.

City Of Edinburgh

124.Universal Credit

Conference is very concerned that the Conservative minority government will continue on its path to drive disabled citizens and our disabled members into poverty by its implementation of Universal Credit (UC).

This is in addition to changes to Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Personal Independence Payment (PIP) where people have lost their entitlement or seen it significantly reduced in what is a financially devastating double impact for disabled people affected by cuts in both PIP and UC.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

The withdrawal of extra premiums in Employment Support Allowance (ESA) for those in the Work Related group can mean a cut of over £30 per week and in some cases over £70 per week, with even higher losses in UC. There will be transitional protection for those already getting the premiums when people are moved to UC but their benefit level is frozen until it meets the level under the new regulations. Where claimants move from ESA to UC due to a change in their circumstances, no protection is available and benefit levels are significantly reduced unless in the Work Related group.

Any disabled claimant who transfers to UC from tax credit, in part time work, will have to undergo a work capability assessment and if found fit for work may be forced to look for increased hours.

The National Disabled Members Committee has been proactive working with local MPs and the Shadow Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in clarifying regulations where decision makers have got it wrong. This means contribution related ESA claimants can now keep that benefit and only have to claim housing costs element through Universal Credit with the ESA deducted from their UC rate. Housing costs are only deducted if the cost is to be paid directly to a landlord, otherwise all of the UC is paid directly to the claimant who is then left with the responsibility of paying the housing costs themselves, except in Scotland.

Universal Credit will impact on both disabled members and other members as it will replace Tax Credits. The benefit pays less money for those who will transfer from (ESA) and the existing Tax Credit system and there will not be the same disability premiums.

For part time workers, there will be the compulsion to find more hours whether you are disabled or not. Any person claiming housing benefit who moves house to another local authority will be forced onto this benefit, alongside the draconian requirements it entails that will cause greater problems for individuals.

Except in Scotland where some different rules apply, Universal Credit is only paid calendar monthly, which again will cause hardship to many disabled people, as some disabled people may find it difficult to cope with such long periods between receipt of payments. With a lack of access to other support such as foodbanks, they run the risk of going without food and falling ill. They are more likely to be unable to keep up their utility payments and risk having no energy supplies to heat food or to keep themselves warm in winter.

We know from experience of the original sanctions imposed on claimants that this will only create the environment for more deaths of claimants unable to cope with these disastrous changes. We know that disabled people have far greater costs and this may force them to seek loans or ask for advance payments from Department of Work and Pensions to be paid back in an unreasonable length of time.

Conference notes there are huge delays in Work Capability Assessments in Universal Credit for new claimants and before decisions are made people could lose benefit for months and pushed into greater poverty and/or homelessness. Existing Support group claimants maintain that status when moved to UC and so get the

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

extra payment, however the Work Related group only get the basic level of ESA. PIP or DLA are not a passport to extra premiums under UC.

To make matters worse, the government announced in February that they would be going ahead with their plans to impose a new income threshold of £7,400 for free school meals, replacing the existing system where benefit claimants automatically qualify for free school meals. Not only will this impact further on disabled families, it will make it more difficult to measure any increase in inequality and poverty as a result of the roll out of UC, as equality measurements have historically been based on free school meals data.

Further perverse and punitive aspects of the government's welfare reform are coming to light all the time, such as disabled people living in care homes under NHS continuous health care funding who lose the mobility element of PIP and can therefore face the loss of their Motability vehicle and hence their independence.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council working with Labour Link where appropriate to:

- 1) Seek to influence public opinion, in particular through highlighting the importance of in-work benefits to disabled workers and the need for out of work benefits that do not push claimants into poverty and homelessness, undermining their ability to seek employment or live independently;
- 2) Work with Labour MP's MSPs, AMs and Councillors to push for reform of this benefit and seek opportunities to put pressure on government and other opposition MPs MSPs, AMs and Councillors to back our campaign;
- 3) Lobby and campaign to restore the UC payments to equate to existing benefit and Tax Credit rates, including all premiums payable for disability and allow 2-weekly payments.

National Disabled Members Committee

125. Universal Credit

Conference notes that:

- 1) Universal Credit has been beset with IT failures and delays;
- 2) There have been many criticisms of UC, which while not opposing UC wholesale, have led to calls for the removal of some of the anti-claimant elements of UC, for example an end to in work sanctions, increased conditionality, monthly payments and the two child rule.

However, it is increasingly clear that the introduction of UC is being used by the Government as an excuse for introducing cuts to the total benefit bill at the expense of unemployed and low paid workers and a number of organisations are now calling not for the suspension of UC but for its abolition.

Conference believes that Universal Credit as currently constituted is unfit for purpose and must be scrapped.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

However, we also recognise that the legacy benefits it is replacing were themselves deeply flawed and that benefit rates have been falling for years. Further to this the Tax Credit and Housing Benefit systems are simply subsidies for low paying employers and overcharging landlords.

Conference resolves to:

- a) Campaign for an ending of Universal Credit and for a properly staffed and funded social security system to include:
 - i) A welfare state that ensures everybody has decent standard of living free from poverty and the restoration of the link between basic benefit rates and the level set for retirement pension as a minimum basic income;
 - ii) An end to the disproportionate sanctions regime common to many benefits;
 - iii) An end to in work sanctions;
 - iv) A welfare system based on need and not on moral judgements;
 - v) An end to the current work capability assessments;
 - vi) An end to the outsourcing of contracts in the social security system to the private sector;
 - vii) Adequate staffing levels;
 - viii) A living wage to be set at level at which all can live based on a nationally recognised Minimum Income Standard;
 - ix) The introduction of legally enforceable rent controls;
 - x) An end to all benefit caps;
 - xi) An end to DWP's target based culture;
 - xii) Full implementation of the TUC's Welfare Charter.
- b) To coordinate this campaign with other organisations who oppose the Government's "welfare reforms".

Birmingham

126.Looking After Our Carers

Better support for carers.

We welcome the UNISON Campaign Mental Health Matters. Campaigning for better funding for mental health and support for people who provide mental health for patients.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

More and more patients are coming forward with some sort of mental health conditions and physical health conditions due to austerity, low wage economy, loss of job security.

More and more carers are having to leave full time work to become a full time carer. Which can lead to debt, homelessness and ill health.

More and more family members are becoming carers for their loved ones. Where is the support for carers? This could be someone who is looking after someone with a terminal illness, someone who suffers with their mental health, someone who is severely disabled. What about our carers.

Social Care and the NHS is relying too much on carers to be able to look after patients to enable a quicker discharge from hospital.

All too quick patients are getting discharged for family members, friends and neighbours to look after. The population is getting older carers are getting older and having to work longer.

What about the carers the family members the friends. Who are there to pick up the support when the patient is suffering what support does the carer receives?

By carers not having support, this then starts to effect mental and physical health. This affects everyone.

Local government are having to make more cuts in reducing respite care, day centre services for disabled and terminal ill people. To having hardly any service or any service.

Carers save this country billions of pounds.

We need to be looking after our carers, if our carers are not looked after or supported how they look after the ill or disabled person.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Lobby government for better funding and facilities to provide the support that carers require;
- 2) Campaign for better work place policies for those staff that are carers.

North West Anglia Hospitals

127.Decriminalisation for safety

Conference notes that UNISON's current policy on sex work, adopted in 2010 on the basis of a motion from women's conference, is to support proposals which decriminalise the selling of sex acts while introducing a 'sex buyers law' criminalising those who purchase sex acts.

Conference recognises that the great majority of sex workers are women. Conference also recognises that a significant number of women sex workers identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender (LGBT). There are also many gay,

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

bisexual and trans sex workers who do not identify as women. Sex work is an issue for the LGBT community.

Conference notes that national LGBT conference takes a different view to that of Women's conference, having adopted motions at several conferences which:

- 1) Recognise that the criminalisation of any kind, including of buyers, increases the risks for sex workers and hinders the global fight against HIV and AIDS;
- 2) Oppose the introduction of a sex buyers law;
- 3) Reflect the view that sex workers are workers, who should have the same rights and protections as workers in other industries;
- 4) Recognise the strong links internationally, particularly in Africa, Asia and Latin America, between LGBT organising, sex worker organising, the fight against HIV and improving health and social justice for people living with HIV and LGBT people.

Conference further notes there have been significant developments since 2010 including:

- a) The World Health Organisation 2014 guidelines for helping to prevent the spread of HIV in the most-at-risk populations, including sex workers (the majority of who are women), transgender people, and men who have sex with men, recommended that countries decriminalise sex work, same sex behaviours, and non-conforming gender identities;
- b) Amnesty International's publication in May 2016 of its "Policy on state obligations to respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of sex workers", which includes advocating for the decriminalisation of all aspects of consensual adult sex work, alongside detailed research reports on these issues in Argentina, Hong Kong, Norway and Papua New Guinea. The Amnesty policy states that it "has been developed in recognition of the high rates of human rights abuses experienced globally by individuals who engage in sex work, a term that Amnesty only uses in regard to consensual exchanges between adults";
- c) The Amnesty research report on Norway provided substantial evidence that the 'sex buyer law' does not decriminalise sellers, as is often claimed, and details the extensive harm caused to women selling sex by the implementation of the law including forced evictions, deportations and denial of medical care, with Nigerian women particularly targeted;
- d) The call for full decriminalisation of consensual adult sex work is also supported by many other organisations including UNAIDS, the World Health Organisation, the Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women, Anti Slavery International, the Global Commission on HIV and the Law, and Human Rights Watch, and by sex workers organisations.
- e) The recommendations in the July 2016 House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee interim report on its Inquiry into Prostitution that the criminalisation of sex workers in England and Wales should end, and that the government should

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

immediately change existing legislation so that soliciting is no longer an offence and amend the laws on 'brothel keeping' so as to allow sex workers to share premises rather than risk working alone.

- f) The rejection by the 2018 UNISON women's conference of a motion "Nordic Model Now!" which called for women's conference to affirm its policy of supporting the Nordic Model, a legal model based on decriminalising the selling of sex acts while introducing a 'sex buyers law' criminalising those who purchase sex acts.

Conference further notes that New Zealand decriminalised sex work in 2003. Since then, this has come to be known as the 'New Zealand model'. The legislation recognises sex work as work, and it is therefore covered by employment law. Sex workers have the legal right to refuse any client for any reason at any point – the law treats sex workers consent as crucial.

The New Zealand model has been praised by women's rights organisations, human rights organisations, and international bodies such as the UN and the World Health Organisation as the best legal approach to protect the safety, rights, and health, of people who sell sex.

There is no legal model anywhere in the world that has been shown to increase, or decrease, the number of people who sell sex.

All that laws can change is whether people do sex work in dangerous conditions or in safer conditions.

Conference recognises that decriminalisation is not about 'encouraging' sex work – it is about the safety of people who sell sex. It also recognises that as a trade union we should be listening to the workers – to sex workers – and should not be calling for laws which put sex workers, including women and LGBT sex workers, at greater risk.

Conference therefore recognises that UNISON should no longer call for the introduction of a 'sex buyers law'.

In addition, Conference notes that TUC Congress discussed sex work for the first time in 2017, when it debated a motion submitted by ASLEF and seconded by the GMB calling for the TUC to support full decriminalisation. The motion was defeated, but it has started a wider debate in the trade union movement on sex work.

It therefore calls on the National Executive Council to begin a dialogue with the National LGBT Committee, National Women's Committee and other appropriate bodies within the union with a view to reviewing and advancing UNISON policy in this area.

Lambeth

Political Fund

128.Promoting the Political Fund and Defending our Political Voice

Conference notes that because of the Tory government's attack on political funds included in the Trade Union Act 2016, it is now necessary for all new UNISON

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

members in Great Britain to opt-in and agree to pay more to be part of Labour Link/Campaign Fund, rather than their contribution being built into union subscriptions and members being able to opt-out, as was previously the case.

Whilst it is right and proper that joining the union is a transparent process, with new members made aware that political campaign activity is a central component of what UNISON does, introducing a separate opt-in risks making the process overly bureaucratic for the member and the union.

Conference agrees that this is a flagrant attempt by the Tories to silence the political voice of the trade union movement and to also deprive the Labour Party of the finances that it needs to fight elections. As such, not only is this move an attack on trade unions and the labour movement, it is also an attack on democracy itself.

The Tories must not succeed in this cynical attempt to silence us. Whilst the union has worked hard to ensure that it is compliant with the Act in order to prevent being fined by the Certification Officer, conference believes that every effort must now go into ensuring that as many members as possible opt in to the political fund in order to ensure that our political activity is properly funded.

To these ends conference calls on the National Executive Council to support the work of the UNISON political fund working group, set up by both sections of our political fund, to engage with branches, regions and Self Organised Groups to pull together local and national examples of how the political fund has been effective, develop effective ways to promote the new opt-in, and share good practice.

Conference further calls on the National Executive Council to work in conjunction with Labour Link to seek a commitment from an incoming Labour government to repeal the Trade Union Act and restore an opt-out arrangement for political fund contributions.

Sefton

Efficient and Effective Union

Branch Funding

129.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.

Many branches now deal with hundreds of employers, for which they receive no consolidated facility time, which puts an increasing strain on branches if member's needs are to be successfully met.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference also notes the continuing need for branches to campaign for their members, particularly as austerity cuts continue 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 notes that Motion 121 was passed at National Delegate Conference 2016 which provided for activity-based budgeting processes within branches. In 2017 this was implemented by the National Executive Council with arbitrary limits placed on the additional activity-based funding that branches could receive. Motion 103 was passed at National Delegate Conference 2017 which provided for the removal of arbitrary limits to activity-based budget funding.

Conference notes that UNISON recorded surpluses of approximately £10million and £3million in the 2015 and 2016 accounts respectively, and holds reserves of over 200million.

Whilst the introduction of the Trade Union Act with its requirement that DOCAS agreements be in place by March 2018 provides a significant challenge to our union, Conference notes that the union is in a reasonable financial position.

Any uncertainty there may be during the period whilst DOCAS agreements are reached does not of itself remove the need for the union to respond to the shift in where the support our members need is provided from. The fact remains that the overwhelming bulk of this work is done in branches, and our union's funding structures must adapt to meet this change.

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.

Notwithstanding the continued operation of the activity-based budgeting process, there remains in UNISON a mismatch of where the union's resources are and where they need to be. Therefore, Conference calls for all appropriate national committees to consider:

- 1) A new scheme of funding to be in operation by 1st January 2019, 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 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

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

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 development 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 2018 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. This review should be lay member led.

South East Region
Bolton Metropolitan
Hackney
Salford City
West Sussex
Wirral

Resources

130.A CASE system for UNISON branches

Conference notes that UNISON's approach to managing casework in branches is paper based and relies on the completion and processing of CASE forms. Branches use varying methods for handling this information, some using spreadsheets for summarising and querying cases and some using purely paper based systems. While some branches have experimented with online alternatives, this is limited in scope and the data is only held at branch level.

Casework data is our critical business information for supporting our members. From it, we can determine and predict: trends in types of case work, time spent on cases, training needs for reps, members and specific teams, summary information on cases from each branch and region, activity of stewards handling cases and regional support needed for cases to be referred. There is currently no way of easily querying this information coherently at a branch, regional and national level because there is no overarching system to capture and manage the data.

A national, online database system to handle cases for all UNISON branches would offer significant benefits for the union, enabling us to plan our resources to organise around the issues in every employer, branch and region. The system would be an effective organising tool and keep our union at the forefront of the British trade union movement by supporting and enhancing our ability to plan strategically using the information collected.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference notes that such a system already exists and is used at regional offices and believes the same benefits should be available to branches

The system for branches should incorporate the following features:

- 1) Linked to the national membership database (RMS);
- 2) Securely accessible from an internet browser and mobile platforms;
- 3) Capture all relevant information for case processing;
- 4) Flexible enough to be adapted to changes in employment law;
- 5) Accessible to activists and branch employed staff and easy to learn.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Consult with all relevant levels of the union to define the requirements of a branch based CASE system;
- b) Set out a clear timetable for the introduction of this system at branch level;
- c) Report back to regions and branches on progress at regular intervals;
- d) Ensure a dedicated committee or sub - committee of the National Executive Council retains responsibility and funding for the ongoing maintenance and development of the system once installed;
- e) Manage the deployment of the system to users, including providing appropriate training.

South West Region

131.A national case system for UNISON

UNISON's approach to managing casework in branches is paper based and relies on the completion and processing of CASE forms. Branches use varying methods for handling this information, some using spreadsheets for summarising and querying cases and some using purely paper based systems. A small trial has been run in some South West branches (Bristol, Gloucestershire) of a database system designed specifically for handling case work and based on the CASE form. This has generally been successful, but is limited in scope and does not offer benefits to the national or regional union.

Casework data is our critical business information for supporting members. From it, we can determine and predict: trends in types of case work, time spent on cases, training needs, summary information on cases from each branch and region, activity of stewards handling cases and regional support needed for cases to be referred. There is currently no way of easily querying this information coherently at a branch, regional and national level because there is no overarching system to capture and manage the data.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

A national, online database system to handle cases for all UNISON branches would offer significant benefits for the union, enabling us to plan our resources to organise around the issues in every employer, branch and region. The system would be an effective organising tool and keep our union at the forefront of the British trade union movement by enhancing our ability to plan strategically using the information collected.

The system should incorporate the following features:

- 1) Linked to the national membership database (RMS);
- 2) Securely accessible from an internet browser and mobile platforms;
- 3) Capture all relevant information for case processing;
- 4) Flexible enough to be adapted to changes in employment law;
- 5) Accessible to activists and branch employed staff and easy to learn.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to deliver a national case system for UNISON by 2020. The National Executive Council should make arrangements to:

- a) Consult with national, regional and branches to define requirements for the system;
- b) Specify the system;
- c) Commission the most cost – effective provider to build and supply the system;
- d) Manage the contract with the provider to ensure delivery to timescale;
- e) Report to the National Executive Council on progress at regular intervals;
- f) Identify a suitable body to retain responsibility and funding for the ongoing maintenance and development of the system once installed;
- g) Manage the deployment of the system to users, including appropriate training.

Bristol

Industrial Action

132.Trade Union Act 2016 and Industrial Action Procedures

Conference notes that despite successful campaigning to mitigate some of the effects of the 2016 Trade Union Act that act has placed further restrictions on the ability of Trade Unions to take lawful industrial action, including measures which make it more difficult to take effective industrial action in time to affect proposals and to continue action if necessary over a prolonged period.

We re-affirm our commitment to campaign for the repeal of all the Tory anti-union legislation.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

However, we also recognise the need to take stock of the impact of the most recent legislation and learn from the collective experience within UNISON, and the wider Trade UNION movement.

Conference recognises that the National Executive Council has responsibility for authorising industrial action under Rule O and has established Industrial Action Procedures, amended from time to time to take account of legislative and other changes.

Conference believes that the National Executive Council is best able to fulfil their responsibilities under Rule O if they are fully informed of the experience of branches, regions, service groups, sectors, and all other appropriate bodies of the union in seeking to organise and conduct industrial action.

Conference believes that there are many lessons to be learnt; of pitfalls to be avoided as well as good practise that can be shared across the union to enable our members to organise and conduct effective, lawful, industrial action within UNISON's rules and procedures.

Conference therefore call on the National Executive Council to conduct a review of the effectiveness of our industrial action procedures, and to consult and seek views from branches, regions, service groups, sectors, self-organised groups and all other appropriate bodies within the union.

Tower Hamlets

133.Industrial Action Ballots

This conference notes that, despite a successful campaigning to mitigate some of the effects of the 2016 Trade Union Act, that act has placed further restrictions on the ability of trade unions to take lawful industrial action, including measures which make it more difficult to take effective industrial action in time to affect proposals and to continue action if necessary over a prolonged period.

We re-affirm our commitment to campaign for the repeal of all the Tory anti-union legislation.

However we also recognise the need to take stock of the impact of the most recent legislation and learn from the collective experience within UNISON, and the wider Trade Union movement.

Conference recognises that the National Executive Council has responsibility for authorising industrial action under Rule O and has established industrial action procedures, amended from time to time, to take account of legislative and other changes.

Conference believes that the National Executive Committee is best able to fulfil their responsibilities under Rule O if they are fully informed of the experience of branches, regions, service groups, sectors, and all other appropriate bodies of the union in seeking to organise and conduct industrial action, particularly delays within the union itself.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

We believe that there are many lessons to be learnt; of pitfalls to be avoided as well as good practise that can be shared across the union to enable our members to organise and conduct effective, lawful, industrial action within UNISON's rules and procedures.

We therefore call on the National Executive Council to conduct a review of the effectiveness of our industrial action procedures, and to consult and seek views from branches, regions, service groups, sectors, self-organised groups and all other appropriate bodies within the union. Our procedures may need to be speeded up/begin earlier if employers are going to stall in order to take advantage of legal time limits.

Kirklees

Schedules

Schedule E Political Fund Ballot

1. Schedule E Political Fund Ballot

Schedule E: Political Fund Ballot

2.

Delete:

“the Certification Officer” means the Certification Officer for Trade Unions and Employer's Associations whose address is 22nd floor, Euston Tower, 286 Euston Road, London NW1 3JJ.”

And replace with:

“the Certification Officer” means the Certification Officer for Trade Unions and Employer's Associations whose address is Certification Office for Trade Unions and Employers' Associations, Lower Ground Floor, Fleetbank House, 2-6 Salisbury Square, London EC4Y 8JX.”

National Executive Council

Rules

Rule C Membership

2. Rule C Honorary Members

C 2.8.2

Add at the end "or in such cases where a Rule I investigation is either impracticable or inappropriate, the National Executive Council shall have the power to revoke the Honorary Membership."

National Executive Council

3. Rule C Membership

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Add new rule:

"C 2.10 Employees of Branches

2.10.1

This category of membership shall extend to employees of UNISON branches who shall pay contributions as provided in Schedule A(1). Except as specified below all such members shall be eligible for all the rights and benefits of membership.

2.10.2

Members in this category shall be excluded from eligibility to:

- .1 seek or hold office in any lay structure of the Union
- .2 be in membership of any branch or of any Group or of any Region
- .3 participate as a delegate in any policy-making forum of the Union
- .4 participate as a member in any policy making processes of the Union (excepting as set out below) or to vote for any lay member of the National Executive Council or any lay member of any Service Group Executive Committee
- .5 be recognised for the purposes of collective bargaining with the National Executive Council.

2.10.3

Members in this category shall have the right to vote in any political fund ballot."

National Executive Council

Rule D Structure of the Union at National Level

4. Rule D Structure of the Union at National Level

D.1.7.1 Delete all after "National Executive Council"

D1.8.1.1 Delete all after "National Executive Council"

D 1.8.1.2 Delete all.

Manchester

5. Rule D National Executive Council

Rule D 2.2.1 Regional Representatives (Conditions)

Delete "1 male" and insert "1 general"

Rule D 2.4 Black Members' Seats

Delete "one male" and insert "one general"

**2018 National Delegate Conference
UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

National Women's Committee

6. Rule D Retired Members Organisation

Insert new Rule D 7.6:

" D 7.6 Retired members will also be eligible for election as Branch Welfare Officer or International Officer. If elected they may attend and speak at all meetings of the Branch Committee as determined by the Branch Committee rules, and may vote on any issue or matter other than one which concerns the pay and conditions of work of members of the union in employment."

Renumber existing rules accordingly.

Transport for Greater Manchester

Rule G Branches

7. Rule G Branches

Rule G 2.1.1:

After "elected annually" insert "or biennially, dependent on branch rules"

Rule G 3.4.2:

After "the coming year" insert "or two years dependent on branch rules"

Rule G 4.1.2:

After "annually" insert "or biennially, dependent on branch rules"

Rule G 5.1:

After "annually" insert "or biennially, dependent on branch rules"

Rule G 7.1:

After "annually" insert "or biennially, dependent on branch rules"

Rule G 8.1:

After "annually" insert "or biennially, dependent on branch rules"

Neath and Port Talbot County

8. Rule G Branch Officers

G 4.1.1 Branch Officers

After "Welfare Officer" insert ", Women's Officer (who must be a woman)"

National Women's Committee

9. Rule G Branch Officers

In existing rule G 4.1.6 after "branch secretary" add ", branch chair"

**2018 National Delegate Conference
UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

National Executive Council

10. Rule G Branch Officers

Add new rule G 4.1.7:

"G 4.1.7 Branch Officers are not permitted to be employed in a branch in accordance with the Code of Good Branch Practice."

National Executive Council

Rule I Disciplinary Action and Appeals

11. Rule I Disciplinary Action

I 8.5 delete after "for" and replace with "a period not exceeding 24 months;"

Bolton Metropolitan

12. Rule I Disciplinary Action

I 8.6 delete after "for" and replace with "a period not exceeding 24 months;"

Bolton Metropolitan

Rule J The Political Fund

13. Rule J The Political Fund

Delete the current Rule J and replace with:

"J The Political Fund

The rules of the Political Fund set out in sections 1-2 below apply to all members regardless of when they joined the Union. The particular rules which apply to members who joined the Union before 1st March 2018 are set out in section 3. The particular rules which apply to members who joined the Union on or after 1 March 2018 are set out in section 4.

1 Rules for the political fund

1.1 The objects of UNISON-The Public Service Union (hereafter "the Union") shall include the furtherance of the political objects to which section 72 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 applies, that is to say, the expenditure of money:

(a) on any contribution to the funds of, or on the payment of any expenses incurred directly or indirectly by, a political party;

(b) on the provision of any service or property for use by or on behalf of any political party;

(c) in connection with the registration of electors, the candidature of any person, the selection of any candidate or the holding of any ballot by the Union in connection with any election to a political office;

(d) on the maintenance of any holder of a political office;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

(e) on the holding of any conference or meeting by or on behalf of a political party or of any other meeting the main purpose of which is the transaction of business in connection with a political party;

(f) on the production, publication or distribution of any literature, document, film, sound recording or advertisement the main purpose of which is to persuade people to vote for a political party or candidate or to persuade them not to vote for a political party or candidate.

1.2 Where a person attends a conference or meeting as a delegate or otherwise as a participator in the proceedings, any expenditure incurred in connection with her/his attendance as such shall, for the purposes of paragraph (e) above, be taken to be expenditure incurred on the holding of the conference or meeting.

1.3 In determining, for the purposes of paragraphs (a) to (f) above, whether the Union has incurred expenditure of a kind mentioned in those paragraphs, no account shall be taken of the ordinary administrative expenses of the Union.

1.4 In these objects:

CANDIDATE means a candidate for election to a political office and includes a prospective candidate;

CONTRIBUTION, in relation to the funds of a political party, includes any fee payable for affiliation to, or membership of, the party and any loan made to the party;

ELECTORS means electors at any election to a political office;

FILM includes any record, however made, of a sequence of visual images, which is capable of being used as a means of showing that sequence as a moving picture;

LOCAL AUTHORITY means a local authority within the meaning of section 270 of the Local Government Act 1972 or section 235 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973;

POLITICAL OFFICE means the office of Member of Parliament, Member of the European Parliament or member of a local authority or any position within a political party.

2 Administration of the fund

2.1 Any payments in the furtherance of such political objects shall be made out of a separate fund of the Union (hereinafter called the Political Fund) which shall consist of two distinct Sections:

(a) the General Political Fund Section, to be known as the Campaign Fund; and

(b) the Affiliated Political Fund Section, to be known as UNISON Labour Link.

2.2 The administration of each section of the Political Fund shall be the responsibility of the National Executive Council which shall delegate this responsibility to the exclusive control of two separate Committees which shall, in the case of the General

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Political Fund Section, be known as the General Political Fund Committee and consist of members of the National Executive Council who in accordance with these rules are contributors to the General Political Fund Section and, in the case of the Affiliated Political Fund Section, be known as the National Labour Link Committee and consist of 12 members of the National Executive Council elected by members of the National Executive Council who in accordance with these Rules are contributors to the Affiliated Political Fund Section and paid up individual members of the Labour party and one representative elected from each Region (save for Northern Ireland) who in accordance with these rules are contributors to the Affiliated Political Fund Section and paid up individual members of the Labour Party.

2.3 Payments from the General Political Fund Section shall be made to promote the Union's political objects, provided that no contribution from this section of the fund shall be made to the funds of a political party.

2.4 Any branch with members contributing to the General Political Fund Section shall be eligible to apply for financial support from this section of the fund. The same shall apply to any Service Group, Self-organised Group, Sector or Region having members contributing to the General Political Fund Section.

2.5 Payments from the Affiliated Political Fund Section shall be made to promote the Union's political objects, provided that no expenditure from this section of the fund shall be made on behalf of or in the interests of any candidate or any representative who has not been officially adopted by the Labour Party (or, in the case of the Isle of Man, the Manx Labour Party).

2.6 Any member who pays a political contribution may, on joining the Union or at any point thereafter, elect whether to contribute to the General Political Fund Section or to the Affiliated Political Fund Section or to both and shall make known her/his election on a form approved for the purpose by the National Executive Council.

2.7 Members can elect to contribute to both sections of the political fund. In the case of a member who joined before 1 March 2018 who elects to contribute to both the General Political Fund Section and the Affiliated Political Fund Section, she/he shall from the date on which her/his election takes effect select to which Section of the fund s/he wishes to have her/his contribution made by deduction from her/his subscription. Any contribution to the other Section of the political fund shall be made by way of an additional levy to be paid annually or at such shorter intervals as the National Executive Council may determine and shall in any event be equal to the annual value of the contributions relevant to their subscription band (See Schedule A: rates of subscription and section 3.8 below). A member who joins on or after 1 March 2018 can contribute to both sections by selecting which section of the fund they wish to opt in to at the point at which they join the union (in accordance with section 4 below), and then undertaking to pay an additional levy for the other section of the fund (See Schedule A: rates of subscription and section 4.13 below).

2.8 A member who is exempt from the obligation to contribute to the political fund of the union shall not be excluded from any benefits of the union, or placed in any respect either directly or indirectly under any disability or disadvantage as compared with other members of the union (except in relation to the control or management of the political fund) by reason of his/her being so exempt.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

2.9 If any member alleges that s/he is aggrieved by a breach of any of these rules for the political fund, being a rule or rules made pursuant to section 82 of the 1992 Act, s/he may complain to the Certification Officer, and the Certification Officer, after making such enquiries as they think fit and after giving the complainant and the union an opportunity of being heard, may, if they consider that such a breach has been committed, make such order for remedying the breach as they think just in the circumstances. Any such order of the Certification Officer may, subject to the right of appeal provided by section 95 of the 1992 Act, be enforced in the manner provided for in section 82(4) of the 1992 Act.

2.10 Contribution to the political fund of the union shall not be made a condition for admission to the union.

2.11 The union shall include in the annual return that is submitted to the Certification Officer details of political expenditure as required by section 32ZB of the 1992 Act.

2.12 The union shall ensure that a copy of the political fund rules is available, free of charge, to any member of the union who requests a copy.

3 Rules that apply to members that joined the union before 1 March 2018 and to political funds set up before 1 March 2018

Notice to members

3.1 As soon as is practicable after the passing of a resolution approving the furtherance of such political objects as an object of the Union, the National Executive Council shall cause a notice in the following form to be given to all members of the Union.

Notice to Members

Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (as amended)

A resolution approving the furtherance of political objects within the meaning of the above Act as an object of the union has been adopted by a ballot under the Act. Any payments in the furtherance of any of those objects will be made out of a separate fund, the political fund of the union.

Every member of the union has a right to be exempt from contributing to that fund. A form of exemption notice can be obtained by or on behalf of any member either by application at, or by post from, the head office or any branch office of the union or from the Certification Office for Trade Unions and Employers' Associations, Lower Ground Floor, Fleetbank House, 2-6 Salisbury Square, London EC4Y 8JX. This form, when filled in, or a written request to the like effect, should be handed or sent to the secretary of the branch to which the member belongs.

3.2 This notice shall be published in the union's all-member journal, which it is the practice of the union to use when information of general interest to all its members needs to be provided to them.

Request for exemption (excluding Northern Ireland)

**2018 National Delegate Conference
UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

3.3 Any member of the Union may at any time give notice on the form of exemption notice specified in rule 3.4 below, or by a written request to like effect, that she/he objects to contribute to the political fund. A form of exemption notice may be obtained by, or on behalf of, any member, either by application at, or by post from, the Head Office or any branch office of the Union or from the Certification Office for Trade Unions and Employers' Associations, Lower Ground Floor, Fleetbank House, 2-6 Salisbury Square, London EC4Y 8JX.

3.4 The form of exemption notice shall be as follows:

UNISON-The Public Service Union Political Fund Exemption Notice

I hereby give notice that I object to contribute to the political fund of UNISON and am in consequence exempt, in the manner provided by Chapter VI of Part 1 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 from contributing to that fund.

Print name.....

Signature

Name of Branch

Address

Date

3.5 Any member of the Union may obtain exemption by sending such notice to the secretary of the branch to which the member belongs and, on receiving it, the secretary shall send an acknowledgment of its receipt to the member at the address upon the notice, and shall process the exemption as soon as reasonably practicable.

Manner of giving effect to exemption

3.6 On giving such notice a member of the Union shall be exempt, so long as her/his notice is not withdrawn, from contributing to the political fund of the Union, where the notice is given:

(a) Within one month of the giving of Notice to Members in rule 1 following the passing of a political resolution on a ballot held at a time when no such resolution is in force, as from the date on which the exemption notice is given; or

(b) In any other case, as from 1st January next after the exemption notice is given.

3.7 The National Executive Council shall give effect to the exemption of members to contribute to the political fund of the Union by relieving any members who are exempt from the payment of part of any periodical contributions required from the members of the Union towards the expenses of the Union as hereinafter provided, and such relief shall be given as far as possible to all members who are exempt on the occasion of their making the same periodical payment.

3.8 For the purpose of enabling each member of the Union who joined the Union before 1 March 2018 to know as respects any such periodical contribution what

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

portion, if any, of the sum payable by her/him is a contribution to the political fund, it is hereby provided that for members who joined the union before 1st March 2018, the contribution to the political fund shall be equivalent to 6.5 per cent of their subscription to the union as set out in Schedule A: rates of subscription. If a member has elected to pay contributions to both sections of the political fund pursuant to rule 2.7 above they will pay the same amount, equivalent to 6.5 per cent of their rate of subscription, to each section of the political fund.

4 Rules that apply to members that joined the union on or after 1 March 2018 and to political funds set up on or after 1 March 2018

Opting in by union members to contribute to the political fund

4.1 A member cannot be required to make a contribution to the political fund of the Union unless they have given notice of their willingness to contribute to that fund (an “opt-in notice”).

4.2 A member of a trade union who has given an opt-in notice may withdraw that notice by giving notice to the union (a “withdrawal notice”).

4.3 A withdrawal notice takes effect at the end of the period of one month beginning with the day on which it is given.

4.4 A member of a trade union may give an opt-in notice or a withdrawal notice:-

(a) by delivering the notice (either personally or by an authorised agent or by post) at the head office or a branch office of the union;

(b) by sending it by e-mail to the following email address
politicalfundadmin@unison.co.uk;

(c) by completing an electronic form provided by the union which sets out the notice and sending it to the union by electronic means with instructions by the union.

(d) by any other electronic means prescribed under the 1992 Act (as inserted by the 2016 Act) Information to members about opting in to the political fund.

Information to members about opting in to the political fund

4.5 The union shall take all reasonable steps to secure that, not later than the end of the period of eight weeks beginning with the day on which the annual return of the union is sent to the Certification Officer, all the members of the union are notified of their right to give a withdrawal notice.

4.6 Such notification may be given:- (a) by sending individual copies of it to members; or (b) by publicising this information in the union’s all-member journal, which it is the practice of the union to use when information of general interest to all its members needs to be provided to them.

4.7 The notification may be included with the statement required to be given by section 32A of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

4.8 A trade union shall send to the Certification Officer a copy of the notification which is provided to its members in pursuance of this section as soon as is reasonably practicable after it is so provided.

4.9 Where the same form of notification is not provided to all the members of the union, the union shall send to the Certification Officer a copy of each form of notification provided to any of them.

4.10 If any member alleges that s/he is aggrieved by a breach of any of these rules for giving information to members about opting into the political fund, being a rule or rules made pursuant to section 84A of the 1992 Act, s/he may complain to the Certification Officer. Where the Certification Officer is satisfied that the union has failed to comply with a requirement of section 84A of the 1992 Act the Officer may make such order for remedying the failure as they think just under the circumstances. Before deciding the matter the Certification Officer:-

(a) may make such enquiries as the Officer thinks fit;

(b) must give the union, and any member of the union who made a complaint to the Officer regarding the matter, an opportunity to make written representations; and

(c) may give the union, and any such member as is mentioned in clause (b), an opportunity to make oral representations.

Manner of giving effect to decision not to contribute to political fund

4.11 The union shall give effect to the members decision not to contribute to the political fund by a separate levy of contributions to that fund from the members who are contributors.

4.12 Any form (including an electronic form) that a person has to complete in order to become a member of the union shall include:-

(a) a statement to the effect that the person may opt to be a contributor to the fund; and

(b) a statement setting to the effect that a person who chooses not to contribute to the political fund shall not, by reason of not contributing, be excluded from any benefits of the union or be placed in any respect either directly or indirectly under a disability or at a disadvantage as compared with other members of the union (except in relation to control of the political fund).

4.13 For members who joined the union on or after 1st March 2018, the contribution to the political fund shall be equivalent to 5 per cent of their membership subscription to the union, paid as an additional levy on top of their membership subscription set out in Schedule A: rates of subscription. If a member has elected to pay contributions to both sections of the political fund pursuant to rule 2.7 above they will pay the same amount, equivalent to 5 per cent of their rate of subscription, to each section of the political fund.

5. NORTHERN IRELAND

**2018 National Delegate Conference
UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

5.1 Under Article 59 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1995

no Northern Ireland member of the Union shall be required to make any contribution to the political fund of the Union unless she/he has delivered, as provided in Rule J.5.4, to the Head Office or some branch office of the Union, a notice in writing, in the form set out in Rule J.5.2, of her/his willingness to contribute to that Fund, and has not withdrawn the notice in the manner provided in Rule J.5.3. Every member of the Union who has not delivered such a notice or who, having delivered such a notice, has withdrawn it in the manner provided in Rule J.5.3, is to be deemed for the purpose of these Rules to be a member who is exempt from the obligation to contribute to the political fund.

5.2 The form of notice of willingness to contribute to the political fund is as follows:

Form of political fund contribution notice - Northern Ireland

I hereby give notice that I am willing, and agree, to contribute to the political fund of UNISON, and I understand that I shall in consequence, be liable to contribute to that Fund and shall continue to be so liable, unless I deliver to the head office or some branch office of the union, a written notice of withdrawal. I also understand that after delivering such a notice of withdrawal I shall still continue to be liable to contribute to the political fund until the next following first day of January.

Name:

Name of Branch:

Address:

.....

Payroll or Membership Number:

Date:

5.3 If at any time a member of the Union, who has delivered such a notice as is provided for in Rules J.5.1 and J.5.2, gives notice of withdrawal thereof, delivered as provided in Rule J.5.4, to the Head Office or at any branch office of the Union, she/he shall be deemed to have withdrawn the notice as from the first day of January next after the delivery of the notice of withdrawal.

5.4 The notices referred to in Rules J.5.1, J.5.2 and J.5.3 may be delivered personally by the member or by an authorised agent of the member, and any notice shall be deemed to have been delivered at the Head Office or branch office of the Union if it has been sent by post properly addressed to that office.

5.5 The National Executive Council shall give effect to the statutory exemption of Northern Ireland members to contribute to the political fund of the Union by making a separate levy of contributions to that fund from those Northern Ireland members who have provided written consent of their willingness to contribute:

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

.1 in the case of members who contribute to the General Political Fund Section an amount equal to 3 per cent of their contribution to the Union.

.2 in the case of members who contribute to the Affiliated Political Fund Section an amount equal to 6.5 per cent of their contribution to the Union.

No moneys of the union other than the amount raised by such separate levy shall be carried to the political fund.

5.6 Northern Ireland members who are statutorily exempt from the obligation to contribute to the political fund of the Union shall not be excluded from any benefits of the Union, or placed in any respect either directly or indirectly under any disability or disadvantage as compared with other members of the Union (except in relation to the control or management of the political fund) by reason of their being exempt.

5.7 Contribution to the political fund of the Union shall not be made a condition for admission to the Union.

5.8 If any Northern Ireland member alleges that she/he is aggrieved by a breach of any of the rules made pursuant to Article 59 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 (as amended) ("the 1995 Order") she/he may complain to the Northern Ireland Certification Officer: 10-12 Gordon Street, Belfast, BT1 2LG, under Article 57(2) to (4B) of the 1995 Order. If, after giving the complainant and a representative of the Union an opportunity to be heard, the Certification Officer considers that a breach has been committed, he may make an order for remedying it as he thinks just in the circumstances. Under Article 70(4)(b) of the 1995 Order an appeal against any decision of the Certification Officer may be made to the Court of Appeal on a question of law.

5.9 Additionally, if any Northern Ireland member alleges that she/he is aggrieved by a breach of the political fund rules made pursuant to Section 82 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 she/he may complain to the GB Certification Officer: Certification Office for Trade Unions and Employers' Associations, Lower Ground Floor, Fleetbank House, 2-6 Salisbury Square, London EC4Y 8JX.

If, after giving the complainant and a representative of the Union an opportunity of being heard, the GB Certification Officer considers that a breach has been committed, he may make an order for remedying it as he thinks just in the circumstances. Any such order of the GB Certification Officer is subject to the right of appeal provided for by section 82(4) of 1992 Act."

National Executive Council

Rule P Standing Orders for Conferences

14. Rule P Standing Orders for Conferences

Insert new rule P 14:

"WORD LIMITS FOR MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

14.1 Motions submitted under Rules P.3 and P.11 shall not exceed 500 words in length.

14.2 Amendments submitted under Rule P.3 shall not exceed 250 words in length."

Renumber subsequent rules.

National Young Members' Forum

Motions Ruled Out of Order

Can be dealt with in other ways

Rates of subsistence and allowances a barrier to participation

Not printed

Epsom and Ewell

Dependant Care Allowances a barrier to participation

Not printed

Southampton District

Activity based budgets

Conference passed motion 121 at the 2016 Conference and motion 101 at the 2017 Conference and calls on the National Executive Council to explain why they have not both been fully implemented?

Kirklees

Conflicts with an Existing Rule

Fair Funding for Branches

Conference notes:

- 1) That the funding of UNISON branches is a complicated issue;
- 2) That it is widely agreed that the marketisation of services that were previously provided by public services has led to many UNISON members being in workplaces where there is little to no workplace representation or recognition;
- 3) That the responsibility for supporting these members often falls to union officers from the branch where there is no agreement from the employer to provide facility time. This either leads to UNISON representatives providing representation in their own time or the member receiving little or no support; both of these situations are unacceptable.
- 4) That some branches have attempted to meet this increased demand from members by employing case workers from their own branch funds which has led to a worsening of branch resources in other areas. Branches do not have the choice not to accept members into their branches and that branches tend to receive members who are not directly linked to their service area

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 5) The activities of branches have been stretched reflecting the pressures created by the austerity programme.

Membership has become more diverse and core employers do not permit use of agreed paid facility time for external employees.

The Branch believes:

- a) That all members of UNISON have the right to full and proper representation;
- b) That branches are not funded in a manner that supports them to fulfil their responsibilities to the many members working in services that have been transferred to the private/independent sector or who work for firms contracted to Health Trusts, Clinical Commissioning Groups and Local Authorities;
- c) That some of these are amongst the most vulnerable public service employees;
- d) That the system by which the national union calculates branch retention is unfair to branches and requires prompt review and rectification.

The Branch therefore asks Conference to resolve:

- i) To call for a further review of branch funding to support branches that the burden of the diverse employer environment has fallen upon disproportionately;
- ii) To ask that the region supports branches in providing representation for those members in workplaces where there is no representation in the meantime;
- iii) To actively promote the role of the union in these workplaces and encourage members to become active and develop as UNISON representatives.

South Gloucestershire

SGE Election Guidelines

Conference notes that the National Executive Council passed new election procedures for the 2018 Service Group Executive elections.

Conference believes these procedures, which include:

- 1) Limiting the amounts of money individuals can donate to a campaign;
- 2) Limiting what can be donated 'in kind' including social media use;
- 3) Excluding branches from including their reasons for nominating candidates;
- 4) Ban candidates from using the UNISON logo in their election campaign.

Will limit the right of UNISON members to campaign during the election

Conference further believes that the new procedures will mean that:

- a) Any rule breaking by candidates could not only lead to problems in the election but also further disciplinary action under the rules;

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- b) If outside 'organisations or individuals' support a candidate that candidate is then responsible for distancing themselves or could face disciplinary action.

Conference is also concerned that the new guidelines allow employed staff to campaign in elections "in their own time" even when UNISON rules disqualify them from voting.

Conference believes these new procedures are anti-democratic in that they will actually stifle the independence of candidates.

Conference also recognises that it has been an aim of UNISON to increase the participation of members in elections, but that these revised guidelines will, if anything have the opposite effect.

Conference therefore:

- i) Calls for the revised procedures not to be used in the 2019 National Executive Council election procedures;
- ii) Calls on the union to organise a union wide discussion as soon as possible which would inform any future amendments to election guide lines.

City of Wolverhampton

Could place the union in legal jeopardy

Time to Take our Services Back!

Not printed

Barnet

Imprisonment of Ahed Tamimi

Not printed

Birmingham

Assistant Certification Officer's Report

Not printed

Kirklees

President's Email Issued on 17th December 2015

Not printed

Kirklees

The Football Lads Alliance

Not printed

London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority

Early Years In Crisis

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Due to government cuts there is a huge crisis across local authorities trying to provide good quality care and support to Children and families.

Due to cuts to Councils' budget and now school budgets this is causing the threat of withdrawal of early years provision.

This is clearly in contradiction with good childcare policy and will lead to children and families facing more expensive and less productive interventions.

UNISON needs to be at the forefront of highlighting the threats to provision such as Council Nurseries.

UNISON should support the pledges in 2017 Labour manifesto.

The early years, education and family pledges include:

- 1) Extend the 30 hours to all two-year-olds, and move towards making some childcare available for one-year-olds and extending maternity pay to 12 months;
- 2) A National Education service from 'cradle-to-grave';
- 3) Overhaul existing childcare system, in which subsidies are given directly to parents, and transition to a system of high-quality childcare places in mixed environments with direct government subsidy;
- 4) Maintain current commitments on free hours and make significant capital investment during first two years of Government, to ensure that places exist to meet demand;
- 5) Phase in subsidised provision on top of free-hour entitlements, to ensure everyone has access to affordable childcare, no matter their working pattern;
- 6) Transition to a qualified graduate-led workforce, by increasing staff wages and enhancing training to benefit staff 'who are among our worst-paid workers', and improve child development;
- 7) Schools funding would increase to £6.3bn, including protection against losses from the new funding formula, free school meals and arts pupil premium.

We call on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Organise a national demonstration with other unions "For our Children's Future" to highlight the threats of service and for the positive policies outlined in the Labour Manifesto for the future;
- b) Furthermore, we should support UNISON members who may be called upon by UNISON and are willing to take action, within UNISON rules, to defend children and family provision.

Salford City

In breach of Rule D 2.12 Employment of Staff

Making our branches fit for the future

Conference notes that for successive years we have debated the major structural changes caused by large scale outsourcing of public services and fragmentation of service delivery and the huge impact this has had on all branches' capacity to support members, especially in private contractors and the community service group.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Despite this longstanding recognition of the problems, we have yet to find sustainable solutions and many members face poorer standards of service and support from their union. This is unacceptable.

Conference believes that the funding formula for branches in place from 1993 and changed in 2004 is not providing the necessary resources for branches, particularly those facing challenges due to the increasing number of employers in which they are organising members, which is partly the result of privatisation. We recognise that branch funding is a complex issue and the resources of the union are under increasing pressure at all levels. However, neither the Branch Resources Review nor the repeated attempts to discuss branch funding at our National Delegate Conference have been successful and we believe that this complex and challenging subject needs more in depth discussion and a wide ranging debate, with a clear criteria for success, which should focus on the capacity of our branches to represent all members in all employers.

We therefore believe, in the year of UNISON's 25th anniversary, that a more comprehensive and thorough review is needed of the whole union. This review should involve meaningful dialogue with all parts of the union from branches to regions to national committees and should encompass the range of issues which impact on branch functioning, including structural issues, the employment of staff and the capacity of regions to support branches and members more effectively. It should also consider whether new resources can be directed to branches by changes to regional or national functions.

This review should aim to provide clear, meaningful solutions to the problems identified above but any final decisions from this review should still remain the property of our National Delegate Conference and should come back to a future National Delegate Conference.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Carry out a comprehensive review of branch functioning, structure and resources, which specifically examines the issue of each branch's ability to represent all members in all employers;
- 2) Ensure this review includes the functions of regions and the centre and is tasked with identifying how more support can be given to branches and members and what changes can be made to devolve more resources to supporting members in branches;
- 3) Report back to National Delegate Conference with a report to Conference in 2019 and ensure that specific recommendations are made to Conference no later than 2020.

South West Region

In breach of the agreement on the political fund

Restore Clause 4

Conference notes that this year marks the centenary of the adoption of Clause 4 by the Labour Party, which pledged to "secure for workers by hand or by brain the full

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

fruits of their industry" based upon "the common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange".

This was Labour's original commitment to put an end to capitalism and bring about the socialist transformation of society.

Conference notes that it was removed by Tony Blair when he established New Labour, which went on to champion the disastrous policies of PFI and privatisation.

With the demise of New Labour and the discrediting of privatisation, support for nationalisation has risen sharply. In opinion polls, over 80% support the renationalisation of the utilities and the railways, while 50% even support the taking over of the banks.

Therefore, Conference believes that with the transformation of the Labour Party today, under Jeremy Corbyn, it is high time to bring back real socialist policies as embodied in Clause 4.

Conference calls upon UNISON to campaign within the Labour Party at all levels in order to restore Clause 4 as part of Labour's constitution at the earliest opportunity.

Medway Health

Not competent

Branch Staff Redundancy Funds

Conference notes that many branches employ staff, however due to austerity measures staffing arrangements may need to be revised in future years which may lead to staff redundancies. Conference also notes that good financial practice is to allocate funds for potential redundancy payment.

Conference agrees that any allocated funds for this purpose cannot be used for other purposes such as campaigning and recruitment.

Conference notes there is no provision under the branch rules for a redundancy fund to be allocated into a separate budget heading on OLBA, and as such this fund will be defined as part of the Branch General Fund Reserves. Branches who make redundancy provision suffer detriment when UNISON allocates branch funding using the Branch Funding Criteria.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to define staff redundancy funds as dedicated funds which will be excluded for the calculation of branch general fund reserves.

Yorkshire and Humberside Region

Rule Amendment, Section P 14 - Limit of Speeches

Add New P 14.3:

"P 14.3 The mover of a motion may not exercise a right of reply if there has been no speaker against the motion."

2018 National Delegate Conference

UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Halton

Increase Resources to Branches to Deal With Private Sector Members and Their Employers

Conference notes that despite UNISON's 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.

Many of these new members have been allocated to Local Government Branches, but these branches have not received additional support to deal with the issues that these private sector members bring with them. Long gone are the days of one employer and one HR department with one set of terms and conditions. Some Local Government Branches are now having to deal with hundreds of different employers with hundreds of different Human Resources providers and covers hundreds of different work locations.

In order to support branches, 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 those branches that have a multitude of employers and workplaces to deal with. Local Government employers are now stopping stewards using their facility time for non-local government representation including academies.

Conference therefore calls for the National Executive Council:

- 1) Ensure that all branches be supported adequately to deal with the increase in private sector members;
- 2) Look into the prospect of Branch employed staff dealing with casework to be funded nationally to deal with issues relating to members not covered by facility time agreements.

Northamptonshire County

Not sufficiently clear

Football Lads Alliance

Not printed

Birmingham

Football Lads Alliance

Not printed

Portsmouth City

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

End “Support with Qualifications”

Conference notes the increased use by the National Executive Council of the position of “support with qualifications” when offering a view on motions brought before National Delegates Conference.

Conference views the National Delegates Conference as the sovereign decision-making body of UNISON and expects motions carried by this Conference to be implemented in full, regardless of any “qualifications” held by the National Executive Council.

Conference further believes that while the members of the National Executive Council are entitled to their own views on aspects of motions put before this Conference, it causes confusion and frustration when the National Executive Council does not present a clear view on whether it “supports” or “opposes” a motion.

Conference therefore instructs the National Executive Council to ensure that views offered by the National Executive Council and communicated by the Chair are clearly marked and stated as “support”, “oppose” or “abstain”.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to end its use of “support with qualifications”.

Bolton Metropolitan

Received past the deadline

Increased involvement of Retired Members in our union

Environment Agency Anglian

Received twice

UNISON Shaping and Resourcing Our Future

Walsall General

Requiring a rule change

Service Group Name Change

Conference notes that the current UNISON Police and Justice service group title does not accurately reflect the nature of the professions of the members in that group.

Conference believes:

- 1) That the name of the service group should reflect the service that it's membership works within;
- 2) That "justice" does not describe the nature of the work carried out by members in the Probation Services and CAF/CASS;
- 3) That the current name may confuse members, staff and the public and potentially lead them to believe that members and UNISON staff working within that sector

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

are working solely or mainly for the Police service which therefore could push the focus and publicity away from both Probation and CAFCASS.

Conference resolves to rename the Police and Justice service group - "Police, Probation & CAFCASS" service group.

Eastern Region Probation

Non-binary inclusion

Conference welcomes the work initiated by our lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) group to make UNISON's organisation, events, policies, systems and good practice advice inclusive on non-binary members.

Non-binary people are people whose gender identity is not solely male or female. They may define themselves as both, neither or something different.

Conference notes that there is growing awareness of non-binary people and issues. While non-binary people are of all ages and as diverse as any other cross section of society, increasing numbers of young people in particular are identifying outside traditional binary gender norms.

It is well established that the ability to be yourself at work impacts on your work performance. It also impacts on your relationships with colleagues and on your health, both mental and physical. A Scottish Trans report of a UK-wide survey of non-binary people, published November 2016, shows that over half the 900 respondents have never felt comfortable sharing their non-binary gender identity at work. Many had the wrong name and pronoun used for them and for a fifth, this misnaming and misgendering was done on purpose. Nearly half had been told that non-binary people are not normal. A quarter had been subjected to silent harassment – being stared at and whispered about at work. This is clearly a trade union issue.

Conference notes that steps to including non-binary members in UNISON have included:

- 1) A factsheet, published in June 2017, titled 'Gender equality: non-binary inclusion', which has been well received across the union;
- 2) A first UNISON survey of non-binary members;
- 3) Changes to a number of UNISON forms and systems;
- 4) An initial review of language in UNISON communications of all forms and a start on addressing non-inclusive language;
- 5) Advice to UNISON service providers.

As this work develops, we are seeing a marked and welcome increase in non-binary members getting involved and active in UNISON. However, Conference acknowledges that there is much still to do.

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference notes that gender matters in UNISON. Conference reaffirms its support for data collection on women members and action to address women's participation, in line with UNISON's rules on proportionality. LGBT Conference has endorsed a call from the women's self-organised group for further action to achieve proportionality, including potentially seeking a rule change to create "general" seats rather than "male" seats on the National Executive Council and throughout UNISON structures. Conference notes that this would also assist in removing barriers to non-binary participation.

Conference further notes that, alongside necessary references to gender, there are a number of unnecessary and non-inclusive references in UNISON's rule book, such as the terminology 'she/he', which could easily be replaced without changing the meaning.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council, working with the national LGBT committee to:

- a) Consider the call for seats reserved for men to be replaced with general seats, on the National Executive Council and other UNISON structures, including submitting any appropriate rule changes;
- b) Identify unnecessary non-inclusive gender references in UNISON rules and submit rule amendments to make them inclusive;
- c) Continue our work to make UNISON, our recruitment and organising, advice, negotiations, campaigns and services, fully inclusive of non-binary members.

National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee

Subscription levels

Conference notes:

- 1) That UNISON subscription bands have not changed since 2003;
- 2) That members earning over 35,000 and above are paying one rate of £22.50.

Conference believes that it is time for the National Executive Council to review the subscription bands with a view to adding a few extra bands to more fairly reflect those on higher earnings.

Conference resolves to:

- a) Request that the National Executive Council carries out a review of the subscription bands and if thought necessary bring a rule change amendment to 2019 UNISON Conference.

Birmingham

Increased involvement of Retired Members in our union

On becoming a retired member there is a sharp cut-off in that you are no longer entitled to hold a position in your branch, (other than Retired Members' Secretary), or attend National Delegate Conference as a delegate from your branch. This at a time

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

when, due to pressures on facility time and demands of work, many branches are unable to fill all the positions on their branch executive and struggle to send delegates to National Delegate Conference.

Conference recognises that there are some positions a retired member could not fill as they involve representing members and/or negotiating with management. There are, however, other roles that a retired member could fulfil. It is a waste of both knowledge and experience for retired members to be excluded from involvement in their branches.

Conference asks the National Executive Council to consider what branch positions a retired member could be involved in and come back to Conference in 2019 with rule change proposals to enable this to happen.

North West Anglia Hospitals

Free Dues For Young Members/50% discount for Activist under 30

I am the delegate from Bournemouth and Poole Higher and Further Education branch, and we are proposing a motion to offer free full membership to all eligible young people below the age of 25, and a 50% discount to any person under 30 holding an unpaid officer or steward role.

For some time now, our regional and national membership has been both declining and aging. Certainly, this is true for our own region in the South West. Young members under the age of 25, and even below the age of 35 - members who we would normally depend on to maintain and grow our organisation - have been dwindling and reluctant to take up membership.

Two of the primary barriers for many young people when considering taking up union membership, seem to be the cost of dues and difficulty grasping the beneficial aspects of being in a union.

This difficulty in seeing the benefits of union membership is partly down to poor messaging and outreach from us unison members as well as an unfamiliarity with the very concept of unionisation within the post Thatcher generations. It's not that there aren't some individually brilliant areas of engagement from regions or union members, there certainly are. And it's not that young people don't maintain values of social progressiveness, fairness, and community action, they certainly do. But what is needed is a national strategy specifically targeted to encourage young people to become young members so that they can see for themselves what the benefits of collective bargaining and united labour are first hand.

If we can get the youth to join us we can remove one of the barriers to membership by demonstrating the benefits and concepts of a union to them as active members and activists. However, this presents a catch 22 as we can't do this if they feel the cost is too high to join, and so, we return to the other barrier.

Our young people are one of the most exploited and discriminated working groups in our economy. In pay and working arrangements they are highest in zero hours contracts and are forced to accept tiered minimum wage that allows employers to treat them as if they are discount temporary staff. Starting wages for new salaried

2018 National Delegate Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

employees, positions that are proportionately biased towards the young, have suffered real terms decreases over the last 10 years, and are often below the actual living wage. Their jobs are also at greater risk than their more experienced colleagues, last in first out, as they say. As a result of all of this and more, most potential new young members are put off of joining the union in the face of having to pay out a significant portion of their already dwindling net wage for something they don't fully grasp the benefits of. By removing the fee altogether, we can offer a "suck it and see" approach that is familiar to a generation of people who have grown up in a world of trial software, free downloads, and ad-supported services.

A wider scope of representation improves the effectiveness of a union and the youth bring with them the kind of diverse opinions and priorities that we need. It is imperative that we invigorate the union with the skills that young people possess and improve the intergenerational awareness of differing priorities within our union. We have a huge wasted resource of enthusiastic, organised, technologically savvy, and talented young people at our finger tips. We desperately need them, we can't afford not to have them. We must implement this loss leader now in order to protect our future survival.

Bournemouth Higher and Further Education

Shared Delegate Seat at All UNISON National Members' Conferences

Add D 1.6.1:

"D 1.6.1

The principles set out in Rule D 1.6 regarding shared delegates apply to all UNISON National Members' Conferences."

Wigan Metropolitan

Rule Amendments Ruled Out of Order

Can be dealt with in other ways

Rule M Indemnification of Members of the National Executive Council and Staff

Rule M 5

Add new subsection:

"(g) any members who have been trained and accredited by the union to act as representatives in disciplinaries and grievances for the purposes of section 10 of the Employment Relations Act 1999"

Islington

Could place the union in legal jeopardy

Rule C Employees of the union

Rule C 2.9.2.4 after "vote for" and before "any" insert "or campaign for or against"

Camden Mid Yorkshire Health

**2018 National Delegate Conference
UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

Salford City

Not competent

Rule D Standing Orders Committee

Delete the word "and" from the end of Rule D 1.8.1.1

Delete rule D.1.8.1.2

Bolton Metropolitan

Not sufficiently clear

Rule D Retired Members' Organisation

In Rule D 7.8 after "send two representatives" delete "of" and substitute "elected by and from among"

***West Midlands Region
Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health
Blackpool
City of Wolverhampton
Herefordshire
Islington
Lambeth
Ryedale
Yorkshire and Humberside Gas***

Rule P Voting

New Rule P.8.4:

"P 8.4 The only outcome of a vote taken by any conference under this rule will be that – once proposed amendments have been considered and either accepted or rejected - a motion is either carried in its entirety or falls in its entirety."

***Bolton Metropolitan
Salford City***

Rule P Reports by National Executive Council

New Rule P 17.3:

"The National Executive Council will be entitled to form a view on motions submitted to National Delegate Conference and to communicate this view to Conference. The only options available to the National Executive Council will be "support", "oppose" or "leave to Conference"."

Salford City

Rule P Reports By National Executive

New Rule P 17.3:

"P 17.3 The National Executive Council will be entitled to form a view on motions submitted to National Delegate Conference and to communicate this view to

**2018 National Delegate Conference
UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

Conference. The options available to the National Executive Council will be “support”, “oppose” or “abstain”.

Bolton Metropolitan