

**NATIONAL DISABLED
MEMBERS
2018**

PRELIMINARY AGENDA

2018 National Disabled Members' Conference

UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Brighton Centre

27 Oct 2018 29 Oct 2018

Efficient and Effective Union

*** Constitution and Standing Orders can be found at the end of the Agenda. (appendix A & B)**

1. National Disabled Members Committee Constitution

In i) in paragraph starting "three National Executive Council" after "whom" delete "must" and insert "should" and after "holders" insert "wherever possible".

North Yorkshire Br. of Unison

2. Amendment to NDMC Constitution

In i) After 'two co-opted members from the National Women's Committee;'

Insert new paragraph

'two co-opted members from the Women's Caucus at Disabled Members Conference;'

Lancashire Police

3. National Disabled Members Committee Standing Orders

In SO5 5.1 after "Conference" delete "co-"

North Yorkshire Br. of Unison

4. Amendment to Standing Order SO15

In SO15.1.6 after 'Labour Party Conference'

Insert

'and are Labour Party Members, and'

Lancashire Police

5. Disability History Month

This conference believes that our National Disabled Members' Committee and UNISON should celebrate Disability History Month on an annual basis.

Disability history month was set up in 2010 to provide a platform to focus on the work that has been done to fight for equality for disabled people. Each year the month has a theme – for example, the 2017 disability history month ran from 22 November to 22 December and was themed around 'Disability and Art'.

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Our local committees, branches and self-organised groups can organise activities for their members and non-members during the month to mark and celebrate achievement, to learn and to understand more about the issues facing disabled people.

These events can help educate and raise awareness about disability but can also be useful to highlight the work of Trade Unions to encourage membership, participation and activism.

This motion seeks to raise awareness of this annual event and encourage branches and committees to plan and promote events.

This motion calls on the National Disabled Members' Conference to:

1. Send annual reminders to regional Disabled Members Committees and branches to encourage them to set a budget, organise, promote and share information about events. This information should be available in all accessible formats, where necessary, including BSL (British Sign Language).
2. Encourage promotion of Disability History Month by highlighting events that have been held and sharing information about these at National Disabled Members' Conference
3. Give consideration to this motion being taken to the National Delegate Conference 2019 to seek the wider union support for Disability History Month.

South West Region

6. Support for disabled people who find it difficult/impossible to fill in (online) forms

The application processes on which we rely are rapidly moving to online platforms. For example, applications for Council Tax support, housing benefit, access to work, and Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

Some disabled people use assistive technology, which is a term that describes tools used by people with disabilities to access and complete everyday tasks. They can include screen readers, text readers, speech input software, and alternatives to standard keyboards.

For many, the online process has simplified the task from filling in a paper application form, but for those who rely on assistive technology they can find that their local assistive software does not interact well with the online form, in short the systems are incompatible.

But even people who do not rely on assistive technology can find the forms daunting, and the questions intrusive.

Conference calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to:

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1. Compile and maintain a list of organisations and their contact details, which can offer telephone support to disabled people to complete online application forms.
2. Compile and maintain a list of organisations and their contact details, which can give face to face advice and support to disabled people to complete online application forms.

South East Region

7. Including Non Binary Disabled People in our Self Organised Group

Conference notes that not all UNISON disabled members define themselves as either male or female. A growing number of our members instead define themselves as non-binary.

For UNISON disabled members who identify as non-binary, the existing structures and practices within the union may not acknowledge their identity and may create a feeling of exclusion from the union, including from the disabled members self organised group.

Mis-gendering, where someone is assumed to have a gender identity they do not, is a particular problem. Some non binary people prefer to use pronouns other than “he” or “she”, such as “they”. The perpetuation of binary models of gender identity throughout our disabled members self organised group, including the continued use of “ladies and gentlemen” to cover all of our members, may add to the sense that there is no place for non binary people in our disabled members self organised group.

Non-binary people who are disabled face multiple challenges, one of which is having a gender identity that few people know about or understand (50% of non-binary people are not out at work (Scottish Trans Alliance research 2015)). This is exacerbated by disability discrimination.

Although gender monitoring remains important in UNISON's work to achieve proportionality for women members, it is not always necessary to ask members to define their gender and doing away with unnecessary gender divisions is best practice and makes our disabled self organised group more inclusive for non-binary people. It can also benefit everyone.

Conference welcomes UNISON's factsheet 'Gender equality: non-binary inclusion' and UNISON's PowerPoint presentation on non-binary inclusion that can be delivered to branches and regions. Conference calls on the National Disabled Members Committee, working with the National LGBT Committee where appropriate, to:

1. Raise awareness within our disabled members self organised group, including branch and regional groups, of steps to build non-binary inclusion in our group and in the workplace, including publicising and promoting the UNISON factsheet and presentation on this subject
2. Undertake an audit of National Disabled Members committee and conference policies, procedures and practices to ensure gender is only being

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requested where it is required to achieve proportionality and achieve equality, and that where it is necessary to monitor gender, options for non binary disabled members are included and non-binary members are not excluded from our group

3. Consider holding a workshop on inclusion of non-binary disabled people at Disabled Members Conference 2019.

National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Members' Caucus

Organising and Recruitment

8. Black Disabled Workers' Professional Development and Activism

Conference notes that racism in the workplace persists and that Black workers are less likely to access professional development and training. They are also less likely to win promotion as a result, and consequently Black workers are often over-represented in lower paid grades, affecting workforce diversity patterns. Where a worker is also disabled this discrimination is exacerbated and access to the career ladder is often closed off completely. Despite some employers collecting data on Black career progression this is often just lip service with no robust action taken to tackle the issue.

Whilst combating racism and disablism is clearly the answer to these problems, creating pathways to professional development for Black disabled workers is one way of employers addressing the issue. Specific training events for Black disabled workers that focus on breaking through the barriers have been proven to have had success, as has the establishment of Black and disabled role model programmes. Branch negotiators and Equality Officers should be encouraged to include this as a bargaining objective with employers.

Within UNISON there is also an issue of Black disabled activism often going untapped. Conference notes the National Disabled Members contacts and officers training pilot run by Learning And Organising Services (LAOS) and planned for September and hopes this will encourage Black disabled activists to come forward. UNISON training must be fully inclusive of Black disabled activists if we are not to lose out on their talent when it comes to Branch Secretaries and other roles in the union.

Conference therefore calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. Work with the National Black Members Committee to consider how pathways to professional development and promotion and the creation of role models for Black disabled workers can be encouraged in employers
2. Consider how Black disabled activists can be further developed and encouraged in UNISON and through our self organised group
3. Work with LAOS to review existing training materials to ensure inclusivity of Black Disabled Members and activists.

National Black Members' Caucus

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9. Disabled women workers' pay gap and professional development

Conference welcomes the recent gender pay investigation, which exposed the gender pay gaps of large companies across the UK. Conference notes that there is no equivalent disability pay investigation, however the Equality and Human Rights Commission noted in its 2017 report that the overall 'disability pay gap' is 13.6%. This would suggest that where women in general are often disadvantaged by a gender pay gap, disabled women are further disadvantaged by a disability pay gap, and that there is still a disparity between women's and disabled women's pay.

Furthermore, disabled women face significant barriers relating to career progression and professional development. Part of the problem stems from negative disablist and sexist stereotyping, combined with a lack of positive role models and examples of disabled women who have progressed in their careers.

Conference calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. Work with the National Women's Committee to consider how pathways to professional development and promotion and the creation of role models for women disabled workers can be encouraged in employers
2. Encourage branch Equality Officers and the new rule book Women's Officers to champion disabled women in the workplace and promote training and development opportunities to disabled women members
3. Lobby government and work with Labour Link to commit the Labour Party to legislate for companies to report on their disability pay gap
4. Highlight the contribution of our disabled women activists and seek inclusion in high profile UNISON campaigns such as Public Service Champions.

National Women Members' Committee

Negotiating and Bargaining

10. An Ageing Population and Workforce: Diminishing Health and Disability

Conference, as we know, the Equality Act 2010 protects people within specified protected characteristics groups, including disability, from direct and indirect discrimination as well as harassment or victimisation arising from a disability. Some health conditions have automatic recognition under the Act while others have a twelve month qualifying period having lasted or expected to last for twelve months or more. The Act additionally provides protection to people without disabilities from direct discrimination or harassment due to their association with a person with a disability or due to someone believing them to have a disability.

However, failing health for many is a gradual process and the provisions of the Act may not apply. In 2017, a report by the Office for National Statistics based on the 2011 Census noted that in England and Wales 5.6% of the population suffered bad or very bad health and people aged 48 years and over were most affected.

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The Department for Work & Pensions' 2016/17 Family Resources Survey reported that 22% of people in the UK had one or more long term health condition; an increase of 3% from 2013/14. 19% of the working age population and 45% of the pensionable aged population reported a disability.

Conference, the UK has an ageing population and workforce:

- a) People are living longer. In 2017, the Office for National Statistics projected that the pensionable age population will increase from 18.9% in 2016 to 22.3% by 2041. The Family Resources Survey noted that a third (33%) of informal care currently provided across the UK is for elderly parents, and a fifth (19%) for a partner. 56% of men and 51% of women providing informal care are in employment. Increasingly, securing reasonable adjustments will be crucial to supporting members with caring responsibilities for elderly relatives as a result of declining health and disability.
- b) The workforce is ageing. A 2015 report by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development noted that the number of people aged over 65 in employment rose by 437,000. This is coupled by a reducing working age population. In 2017, the Office for National Statistics projected that the working age population will fall from 62.2% in 2016 to 60.3% by 2041. Net migration is projected to reduce by 30% to 165 million by 2041 and current government policy, including immigration and the EU referendum, is undoubtedly influencing this trend.

Conference, as we know, people with disabilities are less likely to be in employment and more likely to be unemployed than people without disabilities. A 2018 House of Commons Briefing Paper noted that the employment rate for people with disabilities was 49.2% compared to 80.6% for those without disabilities. The unemployment rate for people with disabilities was 9% compared to 3.8% for those without disabilities.

A 2015 report by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development noted that ill health and caring responsibilities were significant factors behind people leaving the workforce from their early 50's.

Conference calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. Increase awareness across the Union of the implications of an ageing population and ageing workforce within the workplace and its impact on the comprehensive range of personnel policies used to recruit and manage staff with failing health and disability.
2. Undertake a review relating to the recruitment and management of disabled employees in the workplace and report back to Conference by 2020. This may include consideration of:
 - i) How we best support our members with long-term health problems falling short of disability, or providing informal care for ageing relatives with failing health and disability.
 - ii) How we drive greater work flexibility that supports members with long-term health problems or disability remain in work and including greater imagination in what that flexibility looks like.

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- iii) How we positively influence employers to recruit and retain people with long-term health problems, with disability, or with caring responsibilities for someone with failing health or disability.
- iv) How we positively influence employers to recruit and retain older workers recognising that there is greater likelihood of failing health or disability.
- 3. Actively promote the sharing of best practice across regions and branches to generate more creative options of recruiting and retaining people with, or caring for someone with, long-term health problems or disabilities.
- 4. Encourage branches to pro-actively anticipate the effects of an ageing workforce when their personnel policies are being reviewed and use that opportunity to incorporate provisions that increasingly promote the recruitment and the retention of people with long-term health problems or disability.
- 5. Promote the current government 'Disability Confident' Scheme to regions and branches enabling them to encourage greater employer take up and progression through the three levels of the Scheme.

Scotland Region

11. Mental Health First aiders

Mental health issues are common in the workplace, so UNISON members are likely to have close contact with those people affected. However, many people are not well informed about how to recognise mental health issues; how to provide support and what are the best treatments and services available. Furthermore, many people developing mental health disabilities do not get professional help or delay getting professional help. Someone in their workplace who is informed about the options available for professional help can assist the person to get appropriate help and could help those suffering in silence.

When someone is in mental health crises, such as a person who is feeling suicidal, deliberately harming themselves, having a panic attack or being acutely psychotic, having someone with appropriate mental health first aid skills can reduce the risk of that person coming to harm.

There is also stigma and discrimination against people with mental health disabilities in the workplace, which may be reduced by improving colleagues understanding of their experiences.

Studies have been carried out showing the people who are trained in mental health first aid showed improved knowledge, confidence, attitudes and helping behaviour. In addition mental health first aid training "increases participants' knowledge regarding mental health, decreases their negative attitudes, and increases supportive behaviours toward individuals with mental health disabilities. There has also been research to develop international guidelines on the best strategies for mental health first aid.

This Conference calls upon the National Disabled Members' Committee to:

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1. work with UNISON learning unit to develop a course for UNISON members on mental health first aiders
2. encourage branches to train mental health first aiders within their branches.
3. produce publicity advertising the positive contribution mental health first aiders can have in the workplace.

Birmingham UNISON Branch

12. Mental Health - Equipping the Rep

Conference notes that mental health is an issue for lots of our members as employers fail to make reasonable adjustments to sickness absence policies or to disciplinary and performance management policies. Bullying and harassment of members with mental health problems also continues in our workplaces.

As reps we often have to listen and be all things to a member, and sometimes we may need to sign post them to their GP or other organisations. UNISON's mental health awareness course touches on this but there is a need for more.

Conference notes the new UNISON guide "Bargaining for Mental Health Policies" which can be used by branches to negotiate policies in their workplace. Hillingdon branch has started to negotiate mental health passports with the local authority with a view to rolling this out to other employers where we have members.

Conference therefore calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to publicise the new Negotiating Mental Health Policies guide and to work with Learning And Organising Services (LAOS) to find ways of equipping stewards with the knowledge and skills they need to represent and support our members in the workplace who may be experiencing mental health problems.

Hillingdon Local Government

13. The Increasing Practice of Hot-Desking and the Impact on our Disabled Members

Conference is concerned about the increasing use of hot-desking. Employer sell the practice as a way of saving money, at a time when they know saving jobs is at the top of our agenda, with little or no consideration of the impact on staff. However, there are obvious and significant issues with hot-desking that are manifesting on a daily basis in workplaces across the country.

It is clear that there is a significant risk to the health and wellbeing of Disabled Members who are adversely affected by hot-desking policies. The reasonable adjustments that we have fought to have put in place at our workstations do not fit neatly into the puzzle that is hot-desking.

Having to set up your desk every day in a way that alleviates pain while working is likely to have the opposite effect. Moving chairs, desks, adapted ICT equipment and footrests as well as having to adjust or find a desk every time you're come back to the office, even if only for an hour, wastes time and money as well as causing pain and fatigue. While coming back to find your specially adapted chair has been altered

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(or broken) by someone else whilst they've been using it or changing desks every day or several times a day could trigger stress, anxiety or other mental health issues.

Although studies have shown that hot-desking can lead to unhealthy workplaces and impact on productivity there isn't enough information to understand the full impact on our members. We need to assess whether there is a link between increased hot-desking and the rise in work related stress, anxiety and mental health issues before deciding whether negotiating individual reasonable adjustments so Disabled Members are exempt from the practice is a long-term solution.

Conference calls upon National Disabled Members Committee to work with the NEC, National and Regional SOGs and Branches to:

1. Consult on the impact of hot-desking on Disabled Members and the wider work environment;
2. Produce a report on the findings of the consultation with particular reference to the impact of hot-desking on workplace stress and sickness;
3. Identify mitigating actions to reduce the adverse impact of hot-desking on Disabled Members and in the workplace; and
4. Produce guidance including best practice case studies for Branches to use when negotiating for a good working environment.

Newcastle City

14. Securing reasonable adjustments for young disabled workers

Conference notes that securing reasonable adjustments in the workplace is a challenge faced by many disabled workers. However young disabled workers in particular all too often do not have the tools, experience or job security to request the reasonable adjustments they are legally entitled to at work.

This may be due to various factors, including:

- a) the fear of speaking up and not being taken seriously, or worse, losing their jobs
- b) a lack of confidence and understanding of what can be requested with regards to reasonable adjustments
- c) a lack of awareness of the Equality Act 2010 and the legal duty on the employer to provide reasonable adjustments
- d) a lack of awareness of the Access to Work scheme

These fears are often well founded. According to the TUC, young workers are more likely to be in precarious employment, including zero hour contracts. They are less likely to be union members than their older counterparts. Furthermore, young workers with hidden disabilities or as-yet-undiagnosed disabilities often face a lack of understanding from colleagues and managers in any workplace context, based on their age. They may be told 'you're too young to have a bad back!' for example.

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Conference notes the resources that exist for activists when negotiating reasonable adjustments with employers, including UNISON's comprehensive guide 'Proving Disability and Reasonable Adjustments' which lists potential reasonable adjustments. Short guides to Access to Work and reasonable adjustments for members are also available on the UNISON website. However young disabled members and activists are not always aware of the resources that are available.

The National Young Members Forum therefore calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to work with the Forum to:

1. Publicise UNISON's Proving Disability and Reasonable Adjustment guide that includes examples of reasonable adjustments so young disabled activists can have an understanding of the different types of adjustments that can be negotiated
2. Update and publicise the short guides to reasonable adjustments and Access to Work for members and potential members that can also be used at recruitment events.
3. Consider developing a resource for activists that explains how to negotiate reasonable adjustments.

National Young Members' Forum

15. Disability Leave

Disability leave is time off from work for a reason related to someone's disability.

Employees with a disability may require time off if their mobility, or their illness – relating to their disability, becomes more severe. Our disabled members in this situation are frequently treated unfavourably and this then becomes inequality, even though the Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against employees because of a disability.

If jointly negotiated workplace policies are in place, then this helps to alleviate this practice that can take place by employers. The procedures in the policy would give guidance to managers and staff.

However, it is known that many employers do not have a disability leave policy and that is why conference should pursue this.

Therefore, conference calls upon the National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. Collect information from branches to identify how many negotiated policies on disability leave exist and which employers have an existing disability leave policy in the workplace, and share good practise.
2. Circulate to branches the UNISON disability leave factsheet and urge them to raise and negotiate disability leave policies with their employers, where one does not exist

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3. Encourage branches to develop disability leave policies with employers.

South East Region

16. Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity is now becoming the recognised name for a group of conditions which affect the brain's cognitive abilities. The conditions under this umbrella term include Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Attention Deficit Disorder, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, and Dyscalculia, but this is still a developing area of discussion.

Some conditions are lifelong and some can be brought on later in life, from causes such as suffering a traumatic brain injury. Often an individual will be affected by more than one of the conditions and frequently our members will not have a formal diagnosis.

We call on the National Disabled Members' Committee to:

1. Gather information about neurodiversity and to publish a guide for Branches.
2. To increase awareness within and throughout UNISON.
3. To explore and develop training for activists on the neurodiverse conditions and how to support members in the workplace.

South East Region

17. Breaking down barriers for Neurodiverse Women

Conference notes that "neurodiversity" is a relatively new term that refers to people who have dyslexia, autism, ADHD, dyspraxia or other related conditions that may also stem from a neurological impairment. People with these conditions have a wide range of characteristics but may also share some common features in terms of how they learn and process information compared to "neurotypical" people. These features can often be strengths as well as challenges, but bring many benefits for employers which the term neurodiversity acknowledges. Neurodiverse workforces can lead to more lateral thinking and can be a business benefit to employers.

Conference further notes that neurodiverse women are often under-diagnosed because of tired old stereotypes about what boys and girls with these conditions should act like. This ignores the different ways that genders are socialised, which can also conceal neurodiversity in women workers. Therefore a neurodiverse woman is much less likely to be able to request the reasonable adjustments they may require to keep them in work or point to the sexism which plays a detrimental role in neurodiverse women's experience in the workplace.

Conference welcomes the fact that World Autism Awareness Day in 2018 had an emphasis on women and girls and calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to:

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1. Consider developing guidance on neurodiversity in the workplace, which includes a specific reference to the challenges faced by women workers with neurodiverse conditions
2. Publicise and promote UNISON's 'Proving Disability and Reasonable Adjustments' guide
3. Work with Learning And Organising Services (LAOS) to consider developing training on neurodiversity, with specific reference to women and neurodiversity.

National Women Members' Caucus

18. ADHD in the Workplace

Conference notes that Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a neurological disorder and in fact, one of the most well-researched neurological disorders. It also can be said to be one of the most misunderstood diagnosis. Having ADHD affects every aspect of the individual's life.

ADHD comes in three forms – Inattentive, Impulsive, Hyperactive (or a combination of all three) each individual with ADHD has a different set of challenges. Therefore, it is important to consider the unique picture, when designing strategies, and pursuing accommodations and modifications for the workplace.

A high percentage of people with ADHD are also like to have one of the following:

- A co-morbid learning disability such as dyslexia or autism;
- Develop a mental illness, such as bipolar or depression, depression being very common. With this said, those with ADHD are at a higher risk for committing suicide

A high percentage of people with ADHD are likely to experience.

- Relationship difficulties including divorce
- Difficulty at work including regular loss of employment

Conference notes that presently there is inadequate and uneven support across the public sector in meeting the support needs of those in the workforce with ADHD. Many adults with ADHD face not being understood at work , those who are newly diagnosed face the stigma around ADHD and the extra hurdle of having to prove their disability where they may have 'masked it ' unknowingly their whole lives.

Many people with ADHD struggle to obtain the reasonable adjustments that they need to do well in their work role. In many cases they do not pursue reasonable adjustments at all thus struggle when expected to complete the same amount of work, in the same time, to the same standard as their peers who do not have ADHD or other impairments. Those people who do not receive support at work are not only disadvantaged at work, but this feeds into their ability to manage their ADHD outside of work.

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There is a myth that people 'grow out of ADHD' when in fact this is not the case. Many have simply learned to manage their ADHD or to mask it when it comes to adulthood. In other areas of their lives and when they get older and head out into the workforce lack of specialist support remains an issue. Research has shown how this myth has led to inadequate support for those with ADHD.

Support for adults with ADHD is on the whole forsakenly poor. Apart from sleeping, the majority of an adult's life is at work, the difficulties and barriers that those with ADHD face at work is a trade union issue, which we need to take action on. Considering ADHD affects 5% of children and nearly 3% of adults, the affect of inadequate support for those with ADHD across society including health, education, criminal justice, work and benefits, homelessness and social care is vast and little understood or discussed, let alone addressed.

As the biggest trade union in the UK we can do a lot to create greater awareness about ADHD and push for greater support, so that those with ADHD can perform to the best of their abilities in their roles in the workforce.

Those with ADHD and who are working should be congratulated for their achievements in the light of the everyday barriers they face and the minimal support they receive.

Conference notes that ADHD Action is an organisation which was set up only last year and is having huge success in such a short space of time getting support from the ADHD Foundation, Adult ADHD NI, and ADHD Solutions CIC. This organisation is campaigning for an ADHD act which would:

“Place a duty on the Government to produce a broad strategy for ADHD adults and children which is kept under regular review, which includes access for all persons that require assessment and treatment for ADHD and place a duty to produce statutory guidance to ensure implementation of the strategy for the following bodies:

- Education
- Health (including mental, sexual and addiction support)
- Criminal justice (police, prisons, probation)
- Work, pensions and benefits
- Employment law
- Local authorities (e.g. social services, homelessness)
- Media (for responsible reporting)”

Conference therefore calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. Consider Supporting ADHD Action’s campaign for an Act of Parliament for ADHD to commit the government to implementing a strategy for ADHD across many sectors which would support members, colleagues and the communities we serve.

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2. To consider publishing up to date briefings and guidelines for distribution amongst branches which would aim to debunk myths around ADHD, and which includes the particular impacts likely to be experienced by workers and ways of addressing them through organising and representation.

West London Mental Health

19. Tackling the disability employment gap: Recruiting and retaining Deaf workers

Conference notes the recent House of Commons Library report on the Disability Employment gap which highlights that just 49% of disabled people between 16 and 64 years old are in employment, compared to over 80% for non disabled people. The disability employment gap therefore stands at over 31%.

For Deaf people in particular, finding and retaining employment can be a challenge due to a lack of understanding and awareness on the part of employers as to what Deaf people can achieve.

With anecdotal evidence of health and safety sometimes being used a reason not to employ a Deaf worker, there is a lack of confidence, and perceived lack of information, from many employers who are sometimes fearful of employing Deaf people, as they don't understand their legal obligations or the support that is available.

While conference welcomes the recent increase in the cap, Access to Work remains the government's 'best-kept secret' and many more Deaf workers could potentially benefit from the scheme if it was more widely publicised.

Deaf workers also face challenges while in employment, with communication barriers meaning Deaf employees are often the last to know what is happening and promotion often difficult to achieve due to employer attitudes and interview and assessment systems that do not take into account the needs of British Sign Language (BSL) users.

UNISON needs to be a first point of call for Deaf members and potential members. However many stewards and branches have no experience of Deaf members and need the appropriate skills and knowledge to offer support.

Conference therefore calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. Consider producing a guide to representing Deaf BSL users for branches and stewards to use in workplace representation
2. Seek to ensure UNISON's resources on negotiating reasonable adjustments include the needs of Deaf BSL users
3. Continue to support calls to remove the cap on Access to Work which prevents some Deaf people with high-level needs from accessing appropriate support at work.

National Deaf (Native British Sign Language Users) Caucus

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20. Black Disabled Workers and the Disciplinary Process

Conference notes that Black Disabled workers are disproportionately targeted when it comes to disciplinary processes, which is often linked to racism and discrimination as well as a lack of understanding and support for the barriers faced by disabled people, including those with non-visible/non-apparent disabilities.

Black Disabled people are also over-represented when it comes to capability proceedings, again due to discrimination and a lack of reasonable adjustments.

Many Black Disabled Members are isolated from their branch and do not know they are entitled to reasonable adjustments such as disability leave or changes to performance targets.

Conference notes UNISON's comprehensive guide 'Proving Disability – A Guide to Reasonable Adjustments' which lists potential reasonable adjustments. Conference also notes UNISON's factsheet on Disability Leave. However not all of our stewards or Black disabled members are aware of these resources.

Conference therefore instructs the National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. Publicise and promote UNISON's guidance on reasonable adjustments and on disability leave, ensuring the barriers and adjustments related to impairments that affect Black disabled people in particular are included
2. Work with National Black Members Committee to consider ways of further supporting Black disabled members in the workplace
3. Work with Labour Link to seek a commitment to statutory disability leave from a future Labour Government.

National Black Members' Caucus

21. Negotiating and Bargaining for Disabled Workers Rights

Conference notes that the Equality Act 2010 gives disabled workers the right to reasonable adjustments and the right not to be discriminated against. However these rights are often only made real when UNISON disabled members and UNISON stewards raise these issues with employers through their local representation and bargaining.

For example, the Equality Act Code of Practice gives disability leave as an example of a reasonable adjustment and this has been backed up by the courts. However in many workplaces there is no disability leave policy and disabled workers are forced to take leave that relates to their disability as ordinary sick leave which is then counted towards triggers for instigating formal sickness procedures.

Many employers do not take their duty to provide other reasonable adjustments seriously and as a result disabled workers either do not get the job in the first place or are forced out. Some employers also try to push disabled workers into taking ill health retirement rather than implementing the reasonable adjustments that could keep them in work.

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Conference believes that besides compliance with equality legislation being the right thing to do, there are also significant business benefits in having a diverse public service workforce that reflects the communities we serve.

Conference therefore calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. Raise awareness of existing UNISON resources including the Disability Leave factsheet and model policy and 'Proving Disability and reasonable Adjustments'.
2. Consider producing a bargaining guide for UNISON branches and stewards negotiating on disability equality in the workplace.

National Disabled Members Committee

Campaigning

22. Campaigning for Mental Health First-Aiders in the Workplace

Conference, since 1981, workplaces have been required to provide adequate and appropriate first aid equipment, facilities and people, to ensure that employees can be given immediate help if they are injured or taken ill at work. Yet in 2018, there is still no requirement for employers to provide mental health first aid assistance to employees.

A Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) study on the impact mental ill health can have on workers found that:

- 37% of people are more likely to get into conflict with colleagues
- 57% find it harder to juggle multiple tasks
- 62% take longer to do tasks
- 80% find it difficult to concentrate

Since 2007, Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) England has trained over 300,000 people in Mental Health First Aid and want to train 5 million. In a survey MHFA England found that 56% of people have experienced mental health issues and that 90% of respondents feel there is still a taboo around mental health.

Conference, MHFA England are campaigning to have mental health treated in the same way as physical health, with the same provision of mental health first aiders as physical health first aiders.

We know mental health first aiders are no substitute for professional support or adequate prevention of work-related stress but believe mental health first aid is a fundamental right that should form part of a wider strategy for addressing mental health in the workplace.

Conference calls upon National Disabled Members Committee to work with the National Executive Committee (NEC) to:

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1. Support the MHFA England campaign to require employers to provide mental health first aid as well as physical first aid;
2. Raise awareness of the work of MHFA England with Branches, Regions and Self Organised Groups
3. Provide opportunities for Branches to access MHFA training to officers and shop stewards

Northern Region

23. Supporting disabled people to stand for election

Conference is concerned that in the twenty-first century it is still almost impossible for disabled people to stand for elected office or pursue careers in the field of politics.

Almost 30% of people old enough to vote are disabled yet less than 2% of the 650 MPs elected to represent us in Parliament openly identify as disabled. While 10% of Councillors are disabled, this is a significant reduction from 14% in 2010.

Perhaps disabled people aren't interested, capable or the best person for the job – at least that's what the government would have us believe – but the reason disabled people don't stand is the cost of standing for and holding elected office are so much greater for disabled people than non-disabled people that they are prohibitive.

Sign-language interpreters, Braille, support workers, specialist ICT and other reasonable adjustments that disabled people need at work are needed during a campaign and once elected but there is no support available to help with the costs.

The Access to Elected Office Fund used to offer grants to disabled people standing for election in UK Parliament, English local government and other elections for disability related expenses during the campaign. In 2015 the fund was “frozen and put under review” by the Tory government but despite disabled people being unable to stand in a General Election, Police and Crime Commissioner elections, three lots of local elections and mayoral elections since it was “frozen” there has been no progress on the review.

Of course, some disabled people have stood for election expecting that they would get the reasonable adjustments they need once elected but there's no financial help then either. Access to Work helps employers pay for reasonable adjustments in the workplace but the same support isn't available for elected positions even though it can be as time consuming and difficult as a full-time job.

Conference we are never going to achieve disability equality until there is a greater understanding of disability issues amongst those who hold elected positions. Our Disabled Members will never be properly represented until there are more disabled people in elected positions and we will never have more disabled people, including our Disabled Members able to stand for elected positions until the support is there to ensure a level playing field.

Conference calls on National Disabled Members Committee to work with the NEC to:

1. Join the campaign to restore the Access Elected Office Fund;

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2. Write to all MPs asking them to support the campaign to restore the Access to Elected Office Fund;
3. Lobby for Access to Work funds to be made available to disabled people who hold elected office in local authorities, town and parish councils; and
4. Work with Labour Link to improve the support available to disabled people standing as Labour Party candidates.

Northern Region

24. Access to voting

Conference is concerned that it is becoming increasingly difficult for disabled people to participate in the election process. While disabled people have always needed to overcome barriers to be able to vote the government seems determined to make it virtually impossible.

Turnout at elections is often low. Some people aren't interested in politics while others say they're too busy or don't like any of the politicians but when disabled people are asked why they don't vote the answers are often very different. Reasons include:

- I don't know how to register to vote and no one comes to help anymore;
- The information on how to vote isn't accessible;
- The postal vote papers were confusing so I gave up;
- There's no ramp at the polling station;
- The temporary polling station is too small for my wheelchair;
- I'm blind and the polling clerk shouted out who I was voting for last time;
- I don't have any photo ID and someone said I needed it

While some of the reasons may be based on inaccurate information (you don't need photo ID just yet but might in the future) and others may seem insignificant or easy to overcome they are preventing our Disabled Members from exercising their democratic right to vote.

The registration system is confusing and if there's no help in your area you may just give up. The information councils send out on voting is set in law but it isn't easy to understand especially for someone with a learning disability. Postal ballots can be confusing with people often not realising which paper goes in which envelope or where they need to sign. Polling stations should be accessible but many aren't and in some cases staff do need better training. And as for those photo ID's they may not be needed now but the government has already trialled them in some areas and there is significant evidence that shows disabled people are less likely to have passports or driving licenses.

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Evidence shows that when disabled people vote they are more likely to vote Labour. Around 20% of the population are disabled and their votes could make a massive difference in the next Election but only if they are able to vote.

Conference calls upon National Disabled Members Committee to work with National Executive Committee to:

1. Campaign for the introduction of an accessible system of voter registration;
2. Support Disabled Members to request reasonable adjustments at polling stations;
3. Create guidance to help Disabled Members become more politically engaged; and
4. Lobby for a national standard of training for polling officers that includes disability awareness training.

Newcastle City

25. Disability Hate Crime must be treated as Hate Crime

Conference is rightly proud of UNISON's record of fighting Disability Hate Crime. We campaigned to raise awareness of Disability Hate Crime, for better reporting systems and fairer media coverage. We campaigned for disabled people to be treated as reliable witnesses and for more support for victims and witnesses.

The police and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) define Disability Hate Crime as:

"Any crime which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's disability or perceived disability"

And while CPS guidance states that prosecutors should be aware of common features of Disability Hate Crime including:

- Befriending victims to create trust;
- Cruel, humiliating and degrading treatment;
- False accusations against the victim; and
- Incidents that increase in severity or frequency.

The definition is very subjective as there is no legal definition of hostility. What one person sees as a Disability Hate Crime may not be seen as such by another. There has been progress but more needs to be done as the latest reports published in late 2017 show:

- Abuse of disabled people jumped to 3,079 from 1,531 in the previous year;
- Hate crimes against disabled children rose by 148% from 181 to 450;
- Prosecutions of disability hate crime were at a record level of 1,009;

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- Conviction rates are increasing; and
- Worryingly there is still significant underreporting of disability hate crime

The Criminal Justice Act 2003 allows for an increased sentence for those found guilty of Disability Hate Crime but while prosecutions and convictions are up there are still a disturbing number of crimes against disabled people not being flagged as Disability Hate Crime.

Even when a case is flagged a judge can still decide not to treat it as a hate crime as seen in a recent murder case which the police and CPS treated as a Disability Hate Crime but where the judge decided that the victim was targeted because he was vulnerable and not because he was disabled even though it was the disability that made the victim vulnerable.

Some people think it doesn't matter if a crime is treated as a Disability Hate Crime as long as the perpetrator is found guilty but it does matter because it leads to lesser sentences, the victim or their family feeling justice hasn't been served and more disabled people failing to report Disability Hate Crimes because they feel they won't be taken seriously.

Defining Disability Hate Crime by simply adding disability to the existing definition of hate crime has proved to be inadequate. Disabled people may be more physically or mentally vulnerable than non-disabled people. Disabled people can be more trusting and less able to interpret behaviours than non-disabled people. And sometimes disabled people don't realise when they are being used or taken advantage of.

Disability Hate Crime is different to other types of hate crime because disabled people face barriers that non-disabled people don't. It is not better or worse but it is different. It is time to recognise that Disability Hate Crime is different and that to deal with it effectively means dealing with it differently.

Conference calls on National Disabled Members Committee to work with the NEC to:

1. Raise awareness of how Disability Hate Crime is different to other types of hate crime;
2. Campaign for a legal definition of Disability Hate Crime that includes crimes committed due to disabled people's vulnerabilities or the barriers faced; and
3. Work with Labour Link to lobby the government for the introduction of legislation that sets out the criteria under which a recommendation to treat an offense as a Disability Hate Crime can be overruled.

Northern Region

26. Mate Crime

Conference we have heard about hate crimes, however mate crime is not as widely publicised or known about. Mate crimes are usually committed against another for the purpose of some individual gain. Usually financial gain. It is well known that most people with disabilities have a greater level of vulnerability. Perpetrators will attach themselves under the guise of befriending them in order to exploit them.

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Their properties are used to throw parties, grow illegal drugs, have parcels delivered to their address.

Perpetrators visit these people on paydays in order to elicit monies from them, then not visit again until the next pay day.

Ask National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. Highlight mate crime as an issue for our members, their friends and families.
2. Write a leaflet for distribution on mate crime, including instructions on how to report mate crime to the police.
3. Encourage Regions and branches to deliver workshops/lunch and learn events on mate crime.
4. Work with other SOGS to raise awareness, distribute literature and provide training for regions, branches and stewards.

East Midlands Region

27. Tackling Presenteeism in the Workplace

Conference, we are sadly all too familiar with the negative consequences for disabled workers of employers' punitive trigger-based sickness absence policies. However, one of the lesser known consequences of these policies and the general lack of job security is Presenteeism.

Presenteeism is defined by ACAS as turning up for work when unwell and not fit to work. Workers are too scared to take time off to recover when unwell due to the fear of hitting triggers and being targeted for capability procedures or redundancies due to restructuring and this leads to work-related stress, more time off, especially as other workers and in particular disabled workers who might have weakened immune systems and therefore be more prone to picking up viruses can end up ill and longer recovery times from sickness. This in turn leads to increased workloads for other workers as they tackle backlogs and poor staff morale. Conference it is a vicious circle!

In a recent 2018 Health and Well-being at Work survey by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, it was found that Presenteeism had more than tripled since 2010, and over 80% of the 1,000 respondents said they had observed Presenteeism in their organisation in the last 12 months, yet only 25% of these workplaces had taken steps to tackle this problem, a figure that has almost halved since 2016. Conference, these figures are shocking and need to be tackled by this union.

Conference therefore calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. Create an awareness campaign that can be used at national regional and branch level to promote awareness of this issue amongst members and their employers.

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2. Create a campaign to lobby employers to consider tackling the issue of Presenteeism.
3. To produce a charter for branches to use as a bargaining tool with employers when reviewing attendance policies.

Perth and Kinross UNISON

28. Reasonable Adjustments - Reasonable for Whom?

The two legal frameworks that are supposed to ensure reasonable access to employment, shops, business, services and public buildings, for those with disabilities, are-

- The Equality ACT 2010
- The Building Regulations (2004 edition, incorporating 2010 and 2013 amendments) Approved Document M

This Conference is aware that this legislation is not allowing us the access we should be able to have.

This Conference passed a motion in 2008 drawing attention to the unsatisfactory nature of the then legislation, describing the situation as 'inadequate'. Despite some minor legal changes, we know that the current legislation is still inadequate.

Members have 'day to day' experience of being unable to access some buildings, shops, workplaces and public buildings and additionally are unable to access feature within those buildings such as lifts, sanitary facilities, eating/ drinking areas to name but a few -facilities we should be able to access.

This Conference calls upon the National Disabled Members Committee to:-

1. Investigate this issue and bring a report to a future Conference, suggesting ways in which this matter can be addressed.
2. Raise this issue with the TUC's Disabled Members Committee to seek additional support.
3. Seek support within Labour Link to raise this issue.
4. Seek examples from members by raising the issue within UNISON publications.

Cymru/Wales Region

29. Ensuring safe and qualified interpreting services for Deaf people accessing public services

Conference notes that British Sign Language interpreters are regulated by the National Registers of Communication Professionals working with Deaf and Deafblind people (NRCPD). They hold registers of interpreters for deafblind people, lip

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speakers, notetakers, sign language interpreters, sign language translators and speech to text reporters.

Conference supports a registration system as a way of ensuring interpreters are fully qualified to support Deaf BSL users who may be accessing services including education, health and social care, housing, social security etc. Although increasing numbers of people are now learning BSL, this is not the same as being a trained interpreter which is a skill in its own right. Interpreters who are not qualified may be a danger to our Deaf members, with potential safeguarding issues as a result.

However conference notes with concern that people who sign up to an interpreting course can immediately apply for NRCPD registration as a trainee sign language interpreter (TSLI). Although the NRCPD states that TSLIs may not work in the criminal justice system or mental health settings and must “exercise caution” when accepting work in a social care setting, this still allows them to interpret in certain circumstances. With public services financially stretched there may be a temptation to employ trainees who are not yet properly trained. Conference is concerned that people who may not yet have taken any classes in how to interpret could potentially be called on to offer interpreting services in some settings that could put Deaf service users at risk.

Conference believes that NRCPD trainee status should only be given after the student has passed their interpreting course. Full registration could then be awarded after a year of successful practice, similar to a provisional driving license.

Conference therefore calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. Raise awareness of this problem and identify any examples
2. Work with service groups and regions to encourage UNISON stewards representing Deaf members to ask for proof of full registration from interpreters provided by employers in workplace meetings and procedures
3. Identify and assess the benefits for UNISON of backing any relevant and suitable campaigns on this issue.

National Deaf (native British Sign Language Users) Caucus

30. Legal Recognition of British Sign Language

Conference notes that although the UK government formally recognised British Sign Language (BSL) as a language in its own right in 2003, this did not give full legal status to BSL. Scotland is the only country in the UK to give BSL full legal status and to agree to promote its use. BSL still does not have full legal status in England and Wales and the same is true of BSL and Irish Sign Language (ISL) in Northern Ireland. BSL users are therefore being discriminated against and disadvantaged in three of the four constituent nations of the UK.

Conference recognises that Deaf native BSL users are a distinctive linguistic group whose rights should be protected. Achieving legal status means that BSL would be protected and promoted in a similar way to Welsh and Gaelic languages. Service providers would be required to produce information and support where appropriate in BSL, giving equal access to services for sign language users and removing many of

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the everyday barriers that they currently face, and which result in widespread discrimination.

Conference notes that a number of organisations are campaigning for a BSL Act for England, Wales and Northern Ireland that would achieve full legal recognition.

Conference therefore calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to raise awareness of this issue, to support the campaign for a BSL Act and to consider ways UNISON can further contribute to this campaign.

National Deaf (native British Sign Language Users) Caucus

31. Tackling LGBT and disability discrimination in the workplace – an Intersectional approach

Conference notes that disabled people face many challenges in the workplace but this is compounded when disabled workers are also lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT).

The recent Stonewall publication 'LGBT in Britain - Work Report' found:

- Disabled LGBT workers are one and a half times more likely to face harassment and discrimination in the workplace compared to LGBT staff in general
- Almost two in ten disabled LGBT employees (19%) say they didn't get a promotion they were up for at work in the past year because they are LGBT
- 43% of disabled LGBT people have hidden or disguised that they are LGBT at work in the last year because they were afraid of discrimination
- 9% of disabled LGBT people say they have lost a job in the last year because of being LGBT
- One in five (20%) of disabled LGBT workers say that they were encouraged to hide or disguise that they are LGBT by a work colleague compared to 9% of non-disabled LGBT workers
- One in four disabled LGBT workers (26%, higher than the 18% of LGBT workers in general) have been the target of negative comments or conduct from work colleagues in the last year because they are LGBT.
- 24% of disabled LGBT staff were excluded from social events by colleagues in the last year for being LGBT
- One in five disabled LGBT people (21%) say they don't feel able to be themselves at work.

On every measure disabled LGBT staff experience significantly more discrimination in the workplace than LGBT people in general, where discrimination is already high. Where workers are Black and/or trans the discrimination is further compounded. There are also additional challenges for young disabled LGBT workers.

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Conference believes that there are a number of measures that could help improve workplaces for disabled LGBT people but it is essential to take an intersectional approach to workplace equality, recognising that many disabled workers also experience additional discrimination based on their race, sexual orientation, gender identity and other factors.

Conference therefore calls on the National Disabled Members Committee, working with the National LGBT Committee, other self organised groups and National Young Members Forum where appropriate, to:

1. Raise awareness of the specific challenges faced by disabled LGBT workers and consider developing resources to assist branches in negotiating on behalf of these members
2. Work with UNISON's service groups to include mandatory, cross-organisation and intersectionally-aware anti-discrimination training on their bargaining agendas
3. Continue to work towards developing a model reasonable adjustment 'passport' and update and publicise UNISON's Disability Leave factsheet and model policy, ensuring issues of intersectionality are highlighted where appropriate.

National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Members' Caucus

32. The Welfare State: A Hostile Environment for Black Disabled People

Conference notes this government's official policy of creating a 'hostile environment' for non-EU migrants who are predominantly Black. This attempt to make life unbearable for undocumented migrants manifests itself in a growing network of immigration controls across society, including immigration checks to access public services, welfare benefits, healthcare and housing. The Windrush scandal has demonstrated that the hostile environment extends to Black people who are entitled to live in the UK and to access public services. Black disabled people who are disproportionately reliant on the welfare state are particularly badly hit.

The welfare benefits system is already inaccessible for many Black disabled people. The Universal Credit (UC) application system is only available online and in English. Language barriers and higher levels of digital exclusion mean that a disproportionate number of Black disabled claimants find it harder to apply for UC and are more likely to be sanctioned for failure to meet claimant commitments. There are no adjustments in place for visually impaired people or for those with native languages that do not read from left to right.

Research by the Runnymede Trust and the Women's Budget group has found that Black women are disproportionately affected by UC. Black families are also larger on average, and so are disproportionately impacted by restrictions to the Local Housing Allowance, the Benefits Cap, the two child limit and the freeze that has been applied to child benefit.

The roll-out of Personal Independence Payments (PIP) has seen many Black disabled people turned down for benefits that help them to live independently. Assessors are not always aware of the barriers faced by those with impairments that disproportionately affect Black disabled people, such as lupus, sickle cell disease

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and thalassima and the fluctuating nature of these conditions. In addition assessors do not always understand how people from Black communities express themselves, for example mental health problems may be downplayed due to community stigma.

Unnecessary residency checks are also being imposed on Black disabled claimants, leading to benefits being unfairly stopped.

Cuts to local government funding and to legal aid have significantly reduced the advice and advocacy services that are available. This, coupled with the hostile environment that engenders a fear of officialdom in Black disabled people, results in many either being unable to access advice and advocacy or feeling unable to approach advice and advocacy organisations for support and as a consequence they are less likely to succeed through mandatory reconsideration or the tribunal process.

Added to this, Black disabled people also face intimidatory questions when accessing other aspects of the welfare state, including the NHS and public housing.

Conference therefore calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. Campaign against the government's hostile environment policy and its link to the provision of public services and the welfare state
2. Continue to campaign to stop the roll-out of UC and PIP and call for a fairly funded system that can be made to work for Black disabled people
3. Work with Labour Link and the Labour Party to seek a commitment to fair access to the welfare state under a future Labour government and an end to the hostile environment
4. Work with There for You to consider how UNISON can support members applying for PIP and UC and how we can signpost members to advocacy organisations where appropriate

National Black Members' Caucus

33. Improving Access to Sexual Health Information for Disabled LGBT People

Conference notes that Deaf and disabled Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender (LGBT) people may experience barriers in accessing essential sexual health services due to lack of appropriate communication and understanding from service providers. Problems include lack of British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters and electronic notetakers and test results not being communicated in ways that can be understood. Some service providers also continue to stereotype disabled people as sexually inactive. Disabled LGBT people also find their sexual orientation and gender identity is often wrongly assumed or ignored, with significant implications for the sexual health advice and care they receive.

The lack of clear, appropriate communication can lead to confusion and misunderstanding and can potentially put disabled LGBT people at risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) due to information, explanations and test results remaining unavailable in appropriate accessible formats such as BSL. This may also prevent new medical advances, such as pre-exposure prophylaxis (commonly known

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as PrEP), a medication in pill form that protects against HIV infection, becoming widely available to disabled LGBT people.

Removing barriers to access and breaking down stereotypes can lead to improved health outcomes for LGBT disabled people and reduce costs for the NHS.

Conference therefore calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to work with the National LGBT Committee to:

1. Raise awareness that disabled LGBT people need to access sexual health services and may need support to access information on conditions and treatments.
2. Work with Health and Local Government service groups to lobby local authorities and the NHS where appropriate for improved staff training and more accessible information around sexual health, for example BSL and various alternative and accessible formats including DVD's and You Tube and written information supported with pictograms (Makaton)
3. Signpost disabled LGBT members to accessible information on sexual health.

National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Members' Caucus

34. Sling the Mesh - campaigning for disabled women

Conference notes that the recent vaginal mesh scandal has meant that more women have become disabled as a result of secondary and referred illnesses after having implant surgery to deal with female pelvic organ prolapse.

The results of vaginal mesh surgery being used in female pelvic organ prolapse surgery can include puncturing of bowels and bladder, use of colostomy bags and catheters, incontinence, hernias, use of long term medication, further surgery, chronic pain and the resulting impact on mental health and sexual health.

Conference notes the 'Sling the Mesh' campaign which argues that surgeons and manufacturers failed to warn patients of the dangers associated with the surgery. It advocates a full investigation and audit into how many people are suffering because of vaginal and rectal mesh surgeries for pelvic organ prolapsed injuries, and a pause in surgeries while that is carried out. It is also calling for the creation of a national register that enables the health of women affected to be appropriately monitored, and for the NHS to write to and advise every woman who has had such operations to visit a GP if they are suffering pain from the mesh.

Many women affected by the vaginal mesh scandal do not get the support and reasonable adjustments they need from their employers as they go through this experience of disablement. Sickness absence procedures are often used against women, with no adjustments made to the procedures on the grounds of disability, with unadjusted trigger points and disability leave often wrongly included as sickness absence.

Under the Equality Act, disability leave is an example of a reasonable adjustment that disabled people are entitled to but not all women who have been affected by the vaginal mesh scandal are being afforded this.

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Conference therefore calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. Work with the Health Service Group and Labour Link to raise awareness of the Sling the Mesh campaign and support its call for the closure of loopholes in regulation.
2. Publicise and promote the UNISON factsheet on disability leave and the associated model disability leave policy which makes clear that disability leave is different to sick leave and should not be included in sickness absence triggers.

National Women Members' Caucus

35. Campaigning for a Benefits System that acknowledges the needs of disabled workers

Conference notes National Disabled Members Committee (NDMC) recently undertook a survey of members' experience of claiming Personal Independence Payments (PIP). The results of this survey reflected other samples by other organisations but particularly flagged up the issues for working disabled people who are sometimes overlooked or ignored. 90% of respondents were in full time or part time work.

PIP is not just a benefit for citizens who cannot work but is also an in work benefit enabling many of us to get out of bed to go to work. It also provides essential transport support such as mobility vehicles, mobility scooters, wheelchairs and additional transport costs.

Many of our members previously received Disability Living Allowance and have lost out on the transfer to PIP. Our members reported 18% of decisions were revised at either Mandatory Reconsideration Stage or appeal. This is considerably lower than the national figures for overturned decisions which earlier this year reached 70% of all appeals. This can be explained by the fact that working is wrongly taken by assessors and decision makers as giving someone a degree of capability which in fact can only be maintained by the support PIP provides. The loss of PIP removes the ability to work. The current government claim they have introduced a number of initiatives to get disabled people into work (although these are often part time and low paid roles and they are already failing to deliver the one million additional jobs for disabled people promised by 2027) but they neglect the support needed to get up for work, travel to work and personal support in the workplace.

Many members responding to the PIP survey also reported being made to feel like a liar or a criminal when applying for PIP. Fluctuating conditions, including mental health problems, were also not taken into account by assessors or decision makers and assessments were often not accessible.

Universal Credit will be the next hurdle our disabled members may face if they are not entitled to claim statutory or occupational sick pay. If they have to claim tax credits this will now be through Universal Credit at a lesser value than the existing benefit. If they work part-time they may have to go through work capability assessment in order to claim and may be found fit to work full time.

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For both benefits, the assessment does not take into account fully how claimants function and for PIP an assumption is often made that they work so do not qualify.

Conference further notes the latest Government proposals which include responsibility for commissioning homeless hostels, domestic abuse refuges and short term housing for people with mental ill health to be transferred to cash strapped local councils. Disabled women escaping domestic abuse and people experiencing mental illness are likely to face difficulties in accessing the housing they need as they will no longer be able to apply for Housing Benefit. A new 'sheltered rent' rate for sheltered and extra care housing is also planned, which may result in caps to the relevant UC or HB rent payments for these residents, 75% of whom the government estimates are disabled.

Conference is concerned that, as with other responsibilities government has transferred to local authorities, funding is inadequate and will result in a postcode lottery with disabled people yet again the hardest hit.

Conference therefore instructs NDMC to:

1. Work with relevant areas of the union in order to raise awareness both within and outside the union of the importance of PIP in maintaining the ability to work and raise awareness that it is not just an out of work benefit.
2. Lobby government to change PIP assessments to reflect a broader spectrum of criteria in order to identify need more effectively. This should include taking real account of the barriers around mental health and learning disabilities.
3. Identify and support other campaigns from organisations in line with UNISON's policies and values, including the Labour Party (via Labour Link), to stop unfair assessments and remove private companies from the process.
4. Campaign to pause the roll out of Universal Credit and reform the system to reflect the financial value of the benefits it replaces, including disability premiums.
5. Work with the local government and community service groups to support an adequately funded national framework for supported housing (including refuges) that ensures that each local authority properly meets the needs of disabled people.

National Disabled Members Committee

36. Exiting the EU: Protecting Disabled People's Rights

Conference is concerned over the UK's impending exit from the European Union (EU) and the impact this will have on our disabled members.

Conference notes that EU law has led to changes in domestic law in the United Kingdom (UK) which protect equality and human rights and include:

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- improved protections at work for disabled people
- introducing Braille labelling for medicine
- providing greater protections for individuals around the information held about them
- providing greater protections in cases of human trafficking
- making sure that victims of crime, and their family, have the right to information, support and protection
- workplace discrimination protection on grounds of religion or belief, sexual orientation and age
- making sure that men and women receive equal pay for equal work.

Conference further notes that the EU introduced the Charter of Fundamental Human Rights which includes some rights which are not in the Human Rights Act, for example, on the rights of a child and a general right to non-discrimination and also provides a stronger way of enforcing human rights, in some cases, than the Human Rights Act.

Theresa May has already announced the government's intention to withdraw from the Charter of Fundamental Rights and has been critical of the European Court of Human Rights and the Human Rights Act. Withdrawing from the EU will result in disabled people in the UK having no redress to the European Court of Justice which works to ensure EU directives are equally applied through the different member states, and intervene if they are not.

There are a number of directives originating from the EU that have had an impact on disabled people. For example, the Framework Directive for Equal Treatment in Employment and Occupation (2000) helps protect disabled people against discrimination in employment. In 2008, the European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruled that these rights must be extended to carers. In addition, between 2006 and 2011 a number of directives were passed to increase assistance for disabled people on transport

The loss of the guarantee of equality rights provided by EU law could result in a future government seeking to pass laws which repeal or weaken our current rights below the standard of EU law rights, having particular impact on disabled people.

Conference therefore instructs the National Disabled Members Committee working with the National Executive Council and Labour Link to:

1. Raise awareness of the impact of Brexit on disabled members
2. Highlight the issues within the Labour movement and campaign for equality law to be maintained at, or go beyond, the standard of EU equality law
3. Campaign for the UK to continue to be party to the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

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Motions Ruled Out of Order

Beyond remit of the Conference

Motion Make Scoliosis Screening Compulsory in UK Schools

Scoliosis is a medical condition affecting the spine where the spine twists and curves to the side.

In most cases the cause is unknown and it can happen at any point in a person's life; however, it most commonly occurs in children around the age of 10 to 15 years when a child is in early adolescence. It is estimated that four out of every 1,000 children in the UK have Scoliosis and girls are typically more affected than boys.

It is a condition that also affects up to 70 percent of people over the age of 65 years and in many cases may be the result of the condition not being diagnosed in childhood.

In general, Scoliosis is not noticed until it starts causing pain and may initially be put down to "growing pains".

Small curves that do not get worse usually don't cause pain or other problems. However, if not caught early the condition can lead to double curvature of the spine resulting in life changing effects including walking difficulties, extreme breathing difficulties, or pressure on the heart. If the curvature exceeds 100 degrees the condition is life threatening. If not caught early the only option is major surgery. The cost to the NHS for the operation alone costs in excess of £10,000.

A simple screening test called the "Forward Bend" test (also called "Adam's test") could assist early diagnosis. This is as simple as bending forward as if to touch your toes. If Scoliosis is present, in even its earliest of stages, this shows the rib cage higher on one side of the spine than the other. This test enables the earliest intervention to diagnosis and treatment that can help prevent further curvature in the hope that the spine retains curvature within what is deemed a normal range.

Regular monitoring during the growing stages of a child's life is essential to ensure Scoliosis is not developing. However, there is no routine screening for Scoliosis in UK schools. This is despite the cost being free out with the cost involved in training appropriate individuals to carry out the "Forward Bend" test.

Conference calls on the UNISON National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. Lobby the UK government to introduce a comprehensive screening programme for Scoliosis across UK schools.
2. Encourage Regional Disabled Members Committees in devolved nations to lobby for similar to their devolved governments.
3. Support further research of Scoliosis, including the British Scoliosis Research Foundation which is the only UK charity that focuses solely on funding research into Scoliosis.

Scotland Region

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Motion Statutory Sick Pay is unfit for purpose

Conference notes that Statutory Sick Pay in the UK currently stands at £92.05 a week (for a maximum of 28 weeks) which amounts to less than £500 a month and is in breach of the UK's obligations under the European Social Charter according to a 2017 report by the Council of Europe. This leads to a situation where many young disabled people who may need to take time off sick for extended periods are left with a tiny income to scrape by on. Young disabled workers are also less likely to have savings or a financial buffer they can use to make ends meet when on SSP.

This represents a very real burden on disabled workers and is in effect a form of wage discrimination. National Young Members Forum believes this discrimination is unacceptable and represents a further burden on young people when they already face significant challenges.

While some employers offer enhanced sick pay terms, there are often qualifying periods which young members will not meet and there are still far too many who don't offer enhanced sick pay, with young members often more likely to work for such employers, for example in privatised outsourced providers. This conference believes that equalising statutory sick pay with the living wage would be a vital step towards enfranchising young disabled workers.

Moving Statutory Sick Pay to a more equitable level with a long term goal of equalising it with the living wage would represent a real accomplishment in achieving disability equality and to that end we call upon the National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. Investigate how widespread enhanced sick pay is among employers
2. Campaign to equalise statutory sick pay with the living wage
3. Review existing resources and if there is currently no provision for advice on this topic, look to develop this
4. Work with the National Private Contractors Forum to consider issuing guidance to branches on including enhanced sick pay in local negotiations and organising campaigns.

National Young Members' Forum

Conflicts with an Existing Rule

Motion National Disabled Members Committee Standing Orders

In SO2 2.1.3 Delete all of the sentence starting "at least half"

Dorset Police Branch

Motion National Disabled Members Committee Constitution

In i) in paragraph starting "at least" delete "at least half" and insert "one"

North Yorkshire Br. of Unison

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Could place the union in legal jeopardy

Motion Disability Discrimination Claims Protocol

Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

Greater London Region

Motion Personal Assistants – not an unreasonable “reasonable adjustment”

Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

Eastern Region

Not internally consistent

Motion National Disabled Members Committee Standing Orders

In SO2 2.1.2 Insert at end "one of whom must be a woman"

Dorset Police Branch

Motion National Disabled Members Committee Standing Orders

In SO2 2.1.3 Insert at the end "one of whom must be a woman"

Dorset Police Branch

Not sufficiently clear

Motion Amendment to NDMC Constitution

In viii) DELETE 'Labour Link' and INSERT NEW PARAGRAPH 'The Labour Link meeting at Disabled members Conference may elect a Liaison representative on behalf of the Committee'

Lancashire Police

Requiring a rule change

Motion Fair representation at Disabled Members Conference

Conference recognises that UNISON's commitment to fair representation and proportionality is vital to ensuring equality and fighting discrimination. We also praise UNISON's commitment to enabling Branches to send up to 10 members to Self-Organised Group (SOG) Conferences.

But we are concerned that using the membership of a whole Branch to determine the proportionality of a delegation to Disabled Members Conference is not consistent with the principle of fair representation. Disability doesn't discriminate by gender. A higher proportion of working aged men are disabled than working age women. We can't understand the issues Disabled Members face and encourage them to become more active if our structures do not reflect the make-up of our disabled members.

UNISON can and does waive fair representation criteria if a branch is struggling to meet the standard scheme of delegates, for example if a Branch doesn't have a low-paid disabled woman the region can approve another female delegate, but this flexibility doesn't apply to proportionality.

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If a Branch has a majority of female members we must send a delegation of that reflects this, even if the majority of Disabled Members are men. Requiring a delegation to be proportionate to the whole Branch membership is not fair representation, is not reflective of UNISON's commitment to equality and will not help us fight disability discrimination.

Delegations to National Delegate and Service Group Conferences should reflect the composition of the Branch but delegations to Disabled Members Conference should be proportionate to Disabled Members in the Branch not the whole membership. Fair representation and proportionality should be complimentary not conflicting.

Conference therefore calls on the NDMC to work with the NEC to:

1. Consult with Branches and Regions on whether the scheme of representation stops some Disabled Members attending Disabled Members Conference;
2. Consider alternative schemes of representation for Disabled Members Conference; and
3. Take steps, including a rule change if needed, so delegations to Disabled Members Conference can be proportionate to, and representative of, the Disabled Members constituency they represent.

Newcastle City

Statement not a motion

Motion Supporting mental health at conference

You may have supported a motion on mental health before at various conferences. The support has been well appreciated. To a great advantage Unison also has been supporting the NHS, fighting to keep those mental health resources open. But conference what if YOU have a mental health breakdown or an anxiety attack while attending conference?

In 2017 conference I had a mental Health breakdown. I called the Samaritans and left a message with healthy minds, which provided me with support. However the constant call to my family still led me to attempted suicide a week after conference. It would have been helpful if there was a dedicated mental health support worker for me or any delegate to talk to.

I ask the committee to look into providing support at conferences for anyone who needs to TALK.

Also have further information to directed support in the conference guide book.

Along with information on mental health, to supply the helpline where you can get support in the nearest town or city where the conference is being held.

Please support this motion.

West Midlands Region

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Appendix A National Disabled Members Constitution

NATIONAL DISABLED MEMBERS COMMITTEE (NDMC) CONSTITUTION

- i) Membership of the Committee shall consist of:
- two delegates elected from their Regional Disabled Members' Group;
 - three National Executive Council(NEC) members, two of whom must be the disabled members seat holders;
 - two co-opted members from the National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Committee;
 - two co-opted members from the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender caucus at Disabled Members' Conference;
 - two co-opted members from the National Women's Committee;
 - two co-opted members from National Black Members' Committee;
 - two co-opted members from the Black members' caucus at Disabled Members' Conference;
 - two co-opted members from the Deaf native British Sign Language (BSL) users caucus at National Disabled Members Conference.

All members of the committee shall be entitled to vote.

At least half of the members elected from each of the above constituencies must be a woman.

A post of a delegate can be job-shared but only one of that job-share team will be funded nationally to attend any meeting. If both job-share delegates attend a meeting, both will have speaking rights but only one will have voting rights.

- iii) UNISON's National Disabled Members' Officer and other UNISON staff attend to support and service the Committee with speaking but non-voting rights.
- iv) The Committee can set up working groups to undertake specific areas of work relating to its work programme.
- v) Convenors of the Committee's working groups will be agreed by the members of the Committee.
- vi) The Committee shall meet formally four times a year, including a meeting for a policy weekend, with provision for extraordinary meetings if business requires it.

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- vii) Officer positions within the Committee shall be two Co-Chairs, at least one of whom must be a woman and two Co-Deputy Chairs, at least one of whom must be a woman. As set out in iv) the committee can appoint members of NDMC for specific areas of responsibility aligned to the NDMC work programme.

- viii) Caucus Groups will be able to appoint a liaison representative on behalf of the committee for:
 - Black Members

 - Deaf (BSL) Members

 - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Members

 - Women Members

 - Labour Link

All of whom will be accountable to the full committee.

Caucus network meetings for Black members, Deaf (BSL) members, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender members and Women members will be held in accordance with standing orders SO3, 3.1 and 3.4 to enable greater participation of underrepresented groups and to enable submission of caucus motions and amendments

- ix) The officers will be elected at the first meeting of the NDMC following Disabled Members Conference. Where the position is contested there will be a secret ballot.

- x) No person can hold the same officer post for more than two consecutive years, but can put their name forward for the same post after a year's break. Any member leaving a post after two years can put their name forward for election to any other officer post.

- xi) Quorum for the meetings shall be 33 per cent of the Committee membership.

- xii) The National Disabled Members' Committee Constitution may only be amended by a formal amendment agreed at National Disabled Members Conference by two-thirds of the delegates present and voting.

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Appendix B National Disabled Members Standing Orders

STANDING ORDERS FOR NATIONAL DISABLED MEMBERS CONFERENCE

SO1 Standing Orders

- 1.1 Standing Orders are the rules which say how conference must be run. They provide every delegate with an equal opportunity to contribute.
- 1.2 These Standing Orders are agreed by the National Disabled Members Conference.
- 1.3 Where these Standing Orders are silent on any issue, practice at National Delegate Conference will prevail.
- 1.4 These Standing Orders may only be amended by a formal amendment to Standing Orders agreed at National Disabled Members Conference by two-thirds of the delegates present and voting.

SO2 Standing Orders Committee

- 2.1 The Standing Orders Committee will be made up of:
 - 1 Four members elected, by ballot if required, (as stated in SO15.1.1) at the National Disabled Members' Conference;
 - 2 two members elected by the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender (LGBT) Caucus;
 - 3 two members elected by the Black Members' Caucus.

At least half the members elected from each of the above constituencies must be women.

- 2.2 The Committee will be advised by a UNISON staff member, who shall be the Committee secretary.
- 2.3 The members of the Standing Orders Committee shall hold office from the end of one National Disabled Members Conference until the end of the next National Disabled Members Conference. -
- 2.4 At its first meeting after it takes office, the Committee shall elect a Chairperson and a Deputy Chairperson from amongst its members, at least one of whom shall be a woman.
- 2.5 The functions of the Committee shall, subject to these Standing Orders, be to:
 - 2.5.1 ensure that the National Disabled Members Conference Standing Orders are observed, and notify the Chairperson of any violation that may be brought to the Committee's notice;

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- 2.5.2 draw up the preliminary agenda and final agenda of Conference business, and the proposed hours of business, to be circulated in accordance with a timetable published in the official Conference bulletin;
- 2.5.3 determine the order in which the business of Conference shall be conducted, subject to the approval of Conference.
- 2.5.4 consider all motions and amendments submitted for consideration by Conference and, for the purpose of enabling Conference to transact its business effectively the Committee shall:
- 1 decide whether such motions and amendments have been submitted in accordance with the Standing Orders;
 - 2 group together motions and amendments relating to the same subject, decide the order in which they should be considered and whether they should be debated and voted on separately or debated together and voted on sequentially;
 - 3 prepare and revise, in consultation with the movers of motions and amendments, composite motions in terms which, in the opinion of the Committee, best express the subject of such motions and amendments;
 - 4 refer to another representative body within the Union a motion or amendment which in the opinion of the Committee should properly be considered there; the mover shall be informed of the reason for so doing;
 - 5 have power to do all such other things as may be necessary to give effect to these Standing Orders.
- 2.5.5 Any decisions of the Committee which are to be reported to Conference shall be announced by the Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson of the Committee and shall be subject to ratification by Conference. Any section of part of section of the Standing Orders Committee Report can either be accepted or referred back.
- 2.5.6 Members of the Standing Orders Committee shall take no other part in the conduct of Conference.
- SO3 Motions and Amendments Pre-Conference
- 3.1 Motions, amendments and other appropriate business may be proposed for the Conference by properly-constituted meetings of the following:
- Branch Disabled Members Groups
 - Regional Disabled Members Groups
 - National Disabled Members Committee
 - National Disabled Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender (LGBT) Caucus
 - National Disabled Black Members' Caucus

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National Disabled Women's Caucus

National Deaf (native British Sign Language Users) Caucus

National Young Members Forum

3.2 Each of the above bodies may submit up to 3 motions, with no limit on the number of amendments that may be submitted, except for the National Young Members Forum which may submit up to 2 motions and up to 2 amendments (as per Rule D6.2.2).

3.3 Motions and amendments shall be submitted in accordance with the timetable and by the method specified in the official conference bulletin.

3.4 The caucus groups set out in SO.3.1 shall be entitled to meet in accordance with the National Disabled Members' Conference timetable to submit motions and amendments of concern to their respective member groups.

SO4 Attending, speaking and voting at Conference

4.1 Only branch disabled delegates are entitled to speak and vote in debates at conference.

4.2 Representatives of the following have speaking rights only in debates:

Regional Disabled Members' Groups

National Disabled Members Committee

Black Members Self-Organised Group

National Disabled Black members' Caucus

National Deaf (BSL) caucus

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Members' Self- Organised Group

National Disabled Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender members' caucus

Women Members Self-Organised Group

National Disabled Women members' caucus

National Young Members Forum

National Retired Members Organisation

4.3 The following may address Conference:

Conference Co-Chairs

Co-Chairs of the Standing Orders Committee

UNISON staff called to speak by the Conference Chair

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Speakers identified in a Standing Orders report that has been accepted by conference.

SO5 Chairing of conference

- 5.1 The Conference co-chairs shall be members of the National Disabled Members Committee.
- 5.2 The Conference Chair decides on any procedural motions and points of order. The Conference Chair's ruling is final and binding.
- 5.3 The Conference Chair may at any time propose that Conference be adjourned for a specified period. Conference will immediately vote on this proposal.

SO6 Voting Procedure

- 6.1 The method of voting shall be by a show of the voting card which is provided to each branch delegate.
- 6.2 If the Chair cannot make a clear declaration s/he may call for a count or at least 20 delegates present may also call for a count.
- 6.3 The count must be completed and the result reported to Conference before proceeding to the next item of business.

SO7 Withdrawals of motions and amendments

- 7.1 A motion or amendment which is shown on the final agenda may not be withdrawn without the consent of the Standing Orders Committee, whose decision shall be reported to Conference for a formal vote on whether to accept that Committee's decision, or refer it back to them for further consideration.

SO8 Emergency motions and amendments

- 8.1 Emergency motions and amendments are those items of business which are submitted after the relevant scheduled deadline and relate to matters which have occurred after the relevant deadline.
- 8.2 Emergency motions may be submitted by properly-constituted meetings of the following bodies, in accordance with the procedure set out in the official conference bulletin:

Branch Disabled Members' Groups

Regional Disabled Members' Groups

National Disabled Members' Committee

National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender (LGBT) Members' Caucus

National Black Members' Caucus

National Women members' Caucus

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National Deaf (BSL users) Caucus.

National Young Members' Forum

- 8.3 If the Standing Orders Committee gives its approval to the emergency motion or amendment being considered by Conference, copies will be made available to delegates at least one hour before Conference is asked to decide whether to consent to the Emergency Motion being added to the Conference agenda.
- 8.4 An emergency motion will not be given a higher place in the order of business over other motions and amendments on the agenda except where the Standing Orders Committee decides that its purpose would be frustrated if it were not dealt with earlier in the Conference.

SO9 Points of Order

- 9.1 A Point of Order draws Conference's attention to a breach of the Rules or Standing Orders.
- 9.2 A Point of Order may be raised by a delegate at any stage during Conference if s/he considers that business is not being conducted in accordance with UNISON's Rules or the Conference's Standing Orders.
- 9.3 The Point of Order must be raised as soon as the alleged breach occurs, or at the earliest practicable moment.
- 9.4 The Point of Order shall not be debated or amended, and the Conference Chair shall make an immediate and final ruling.

SO10 Procedural Motions

- 10.1 The following procedural motions may be moved at any time without previous notice on the agenda:
- 10.1.1 "That the question be now put," provided that
- i) the Conference Chair may advise Conference not to accept this motion if in her/his opinion the matter has not been sufficiently debated.
 - ii) if this procedural motion is carried, it shall take effect at once, subject only to any right of reply under these Standing Orders.

10.1.2 "That the Conference proceed to the next business"

If this is carried it means that the matter being discussed immediately falls from the agenda and Conference proceeds to the next item of business.

10.1.3 "That the debate be adjourned".

10.1.4 "That the Conference (or part of Conference) be held in private session."

10.1.5 The only people permitted to attend a private session of Conference are:

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- i) Delegates
- ii) Members of the National Disabled Members' Committee
- iii) Members of the Standing Orders Committee
- iv) Representatives as set out in SO 4.2
- v) Personal assistants working with any of the above
- vi) Members of staff who have been authorised by the National Disabled Members' Committee or the UNISON General Secretary to attend Conference
- vii) Any other people as the Conference Chair shall determine.

10.2 Procedural motions are put to the vote immediately without discussion and no amendment is allowed, except for motion 10.1.4, where the Conference Chair may allow debate and/or amendments.

10.3 A person who has already spoken on the motion or amendment in question shall not move one of the procedural motions above.

SO11 Conduct of debates

11.1 The mover of a motion or an amendment may speak for no more than five minutes, and each subsequent speaker may speak for no more than three minutes.

11.2 The Chairperson may exercise their discretion to extend speaking times for delegates whose access requirements, in the Chairperson's judgement, would otherwise impact on their contribution, up to a maximum of double the speaking limits set in 11.1.

11.3 When an amendment to a motion is moved no further amendment may be moved until the first one is disposed of, except during grouped debates.

11.4 When an amendment to a motion is carried, the motion, as amended, becomes the substantive motion, to which a further amendment may be moved.

11.5 A delegate may not move more than one amendment to any one motion. The mover of a motion may not move an amendment to their own motion.

11.6 No delegates shall speak more than once on a motion or amendment, except that the mover of the original motion may exercise a right of reply for not more than three minutes. No new material may be introduced during a right of reply.

SO12 Grouped debates and sequential voting

12.1 The Standing Orders Committee may propose grouped debates or sequential voting on motions or amendments which deal with the same subject matter.

12.2 The following procedure will be followed:

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- 12.2.1 The Conference Chair will advise Conference of the order of business and of the sequence in which motions and amendments will be moved and voted on following a general debate, and of the effect of certain proposals on others;
- 12.2.2 All motions and amendments included in the debate shall be moved;
- 12.2.3 The general debate shall take place;
- 12.2.4 The Conference Chair shall again state the order of voting and advise Conference which, if any, motions and amendments will fall if others are carried;
- 12.2.5 Voting will take place on motions, preceded by relevant amendments, in the order in which they were moved.
- 12.2.6 A grouped debate may not be adjourned until after all the motions and amendments have been moved.

SO13 National Disabled Members' Committee at Conference

- 13.1 At the start of each Conference the National Disabled Members' Committee shall present its report for the past year, which shall be circulated to delegates prior to Conference.
- 13.2 Any report which contains proposals or recommendations requiring approval and adoption by Conference shall be submitted in advance in the form of a motion, in accordance with the timetable.
- 13.3 The National Disabled Members' Committee will indicate its policy on all items to delegates, in advance of a vote on the item.

SO14 Reference of outstanding items to the National Disabled Members Committee

- 14.1 Any motions not reached on the agenda shall stand referred to the National Disabled Members' Committee and reported on after the first meeting of that Committee after conference.

SO15 Elections at Conference

- 15.1 The following elections will take place at Conference:
 - 15.1.1 National Disabled Members Conference Standing Orders Committee
 - 15.1.2 Two delegates to the union's National Delegate Conference
 - 15.1.3 One newsheet representative for the union's National Delegate Conference
 - 15.1.4 One delegate for UNISON's delegation to Trade Union Congress
 - 15.1.5 Two delegates to each of the union's service group conferences
 - 15.1.6 Two delegates to Labour Party Conference, who shall also be delegates to the Labour Link Forum

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- 15.1.7 Two delegates to the National Disabled Members Committee from each of the following caucuses:
- (i) the disabled lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members' caucus;
 - (ii) the disabled Black member's caucus;
 - (iii) the Deaf (native British Sign Language users) caucus.
- 15.2 Nominees for these posts must be eligible to stand in the relevant capacity and be amongst those registered to attend Conference as:
- (i) delegates from branches or regions;
 - (ii) the National Disabled Members Committee;
 - (iii) the Standing Orders Committee;
 - (iii) Representatives of Self-Organised Groups;
 - (iv) Representatives of the National Young Members Forum.
- 15.3 Any contested election for positions under 15.1.1, 15.1.2, 15.1.3, 15.1.4 will be decided by ballot. Only those registered as conference delegates from branches or the National Disabled Members Committee shall be entitled to vote.
- 15.4 Any contested positions under 15.1.5, 15.1.6, or 15.1.7 will be decided by the meetings convened at Conference for members of those constituencies.
- 15.5 All elections will be subject to proportionality for women members.
- SO16 Selection of motions for National Delegate Conference
- 16.1 A ballot will be conducted at Conference to determine from amongst those motions carried by Conference, which two shall be submitted as proposed business for National Delegate Conference.
- SO17 Suspension of Standing Orders
- 17.1 Any one or more of these Standing Orders may be suspended by a resolution of Conference in relation to a specific item of business before the Conference or to the proceedings of Conference, provided that at least two-thirds of the delegates present and voting vote for the resolution.